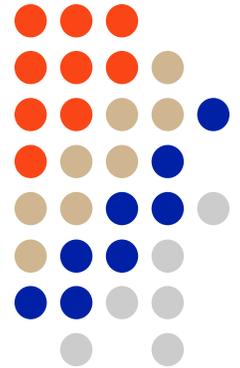


Biostatistics Newsletter

2017



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Greetings from the Chair**
- **Faculty and Staff**
- **Accomplishments and Awards**
- **In the Spotlight**
- **2017 Seminar Series**
- **Acknowledgements**
- **Post Doc/ Visiting Scholars**
- **Recent Graduates**
- **Contributions and Gifts**

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Peihua Qiu, Professor and Founding Chair

I would like to begin by thanking our faculty, staff and students for your hard work and dedication this past year. I would also like to thank our alumni and friends for your continued support. Although this year presented its fair share of challenges, the department had a very successful year. In regards to our methodological and collaborative research, our faculty and students produced more than 100 publications, of which many have been published in top journals such as *Biometrics*, *The Lancet*, *PNAS* and *Nature Genetics*. We also successfully hosted a biostatistics workshop on “Statistical Inference for Biomedical Big Data.” Many leading researchers in the nation participated in this event, and it definitely increased the visibility of our department in the nation. To help with our research, the department received \$10.28 million in extramural research funding this past year. You will read many successful stories of faculty and students’ research in this newsletter.



In addition to the research accomplishments mentioned above, the department also made some progresses in its educational programs. First, we launched the M.S. online program in the Fall 2017. This program is the first of its kind in the nation and is designed to facilitate the development of a strong theoretical foundation in biostatistics, a broad-based understanding of biostatistical methods, and advanced skills in data analysis. The inaugural class consists of 25 domestic and international students. Second, two new service courses and one core course for our PhD program on statistical computing have been developed and offered this academic year. Other courses have been adjusted and improved as well. These efforts should strengthen our biostatistical educational and training programs in a substantial way. Finally, students’ participation in department/college activities has improved. Last year, the department helped graduate students create a biostatistics student organization that organizes social activities for all students in the department and also discusses student-related affairs. During the monthly department faculty meetings, a student representative from the organization is invited to attend and given the opportunity to communicate with faculty about students’ suggestions/opinions on potential improvements of their training, research, and career development.

The growth and success of the department remains a constant goal. For the 2017-2018 academic year, we successfully recruited 6 Ph.D. and 13 M.S. students, while also hired an additional 6 faculty members. For the 2017 academic year, the department graduated 4 Ph.D. and 11 M.S. students. Of these graduates, all found jobs immediately after graduation.

Please enjoy this newsletter and it is a great display of all of this years’ wonderful accomplishments and moments. I look forward to this upcoming year and your continued support in the future.

Thank you, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

FACULTY AND STAFF



Left to right Front: Sue McGorray, Meenakshi Devidas, Yueh-Yun Chi, Babette Brumback

Center: Susmita Datta, Qinglin Pei, Arlene Naranjo, Steven Foti

Back: Robert Parker, Zhiguang Huo, John Kairalla, Somnath Datta, Peihua Qiu, Sam Wu, Yang Yang



Left to right: Kristen Cason, Jason Talbert, Ashley Spink, Deana Nance

INTRODUCING NEW FACULTY & STAFF

Natalie Dean– Assistant Professor



As of July 14, 2017, Dr. Natalie E. Dean has started a new position in the department as tenure-track Assistant Professor.

Dr. Dean received her PhD in Biostatistics from Harvard University in May 2014. She received her AM in Biostatistics from Harvard University and her BA in Biology and Mathematics/Statistics from Boston University. She worked as an external statistical consultant for the World Health Organization’s HIV department. Since January 2015, she conducted research as a postdoctoral associate in the Department of Biostatistics at UF with Professor Ira Longini. In this position, she assisted in the design and analysis of a Phase III Ebola vaccine trial in Guinea, along with other projects on analyzing and modeling Ebola and Zika outbreaks, planning dengue serosurveys, and designing vaccine trial strategies for emerging pathogens.

Areas of research for Dr. Dean include infectious disease surveillance, survey design, clinical trials, and vaccines. In her free time, Dr. Dean enjoys cooking, Zumba, and spending time with her husband, Ethan and son, Owen.

Steven Foti– Clinical Assistant Professor

Dr. Steven Foti joined the department on July 1, 2017 as a Clinical Assistant Professor. He received his PhD in Statistics Education from the University of Florida in early August 2017. He previously received his MS in Statistics from the University of Florida and his BS in Applied Mathematics & Statistics and Physics from Clarkson University. He has spent the past four years as a graduate school fellow in the School of Teaching and Learning at UF. During this time he was an instructor of mathematics content and teaching methods in the Unified Elementary ProTeach program and of AP Statistics at P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School. He has been in teaching roles for the past eight years.



As a researcher, Dr. Foti is involved in the NSF-funded Levels of Conceptual Understanding of Statistics (LOCUS) project, which led to the development of statistics assessments that he continues to utilize in his research on how students understand variability. Areas of interest for Dr. Foti include statistical literacy, research and evaluation methodology, and assessments. In his free time, Dr. Foti enjoys cycling in local charity rides, collecting mechanical watches, and exploring everything Gainesville has to offer.

Zhiguang “Caleb” Huo– Assistant Professor



On July 14, 2017, Dr. Ziguang Huo joined the department as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Huo received his PhD in Biostatistics from the University of Pittsburgh. His research interests lie in both statistical methodology and its applications to genomics and bioinformatics. For methodological research, he is particularly interested in genomic data integration, variable selection in high-dimensional data, Bayesian methods, optimization and statistical computing. For collaborative research, he has worked extensively on bioinformatics and high-throughput data in the field of cancer and psychiatry diseases. He has a broad interest in a wide range of data and currently actively seeking for collaborations with other people to better understand/analyze their hypothesis/data. He is teaching a course on Biostatistical Computing. In his spare time, he enjoys running, cycling and swimming.

INTRODUCING NEW FACULTY & STAFF

Robert Parker– Clinical Assistant Professor

Dr. Parker joined the department on June 2, 2017. Dr. Parker received his PhD in Statistics from the University of Florida in May 2017. He has spent the past five years as a graduate teaching assistant in the Statistics Department at UF, where he was the instructor for several introductory statistics courses and an adjunct instructor with the Department of Mathematics at Santa Fe College. Dr. Parker's areas of research include probability theory, laws of large numbers for Banach space valued random elements, Markov chain Monte Carlo and Bayesian methods. In his free time, Dr. Parker enjoys reading, playing tennis and spending time outdoors with his two dogs, Abby and Zoe.



Jason Talbert– Fiscal Assistant II

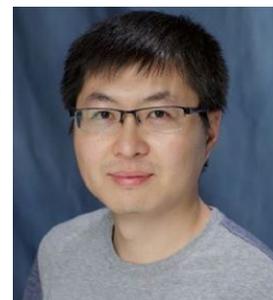


Jason Talbert joined the department on January 13, 2017 as Fiscal Assistant II. After almost twenty years living in Maryland and West Virginia, Jason Talbert recently returned to the Sunshine State. Prior to relocating to Gainesville, he worked for over thirteen years assisting in the fiscal administration of governmental and multi-employer retirement plans. He most recently attended Western Governors University, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. He also previously earned a Bachelor's Degree in Management from American Public University.

Jason enjoys playing and watching baseball, especially when it comes to his beloved Baltimore Orioles. On his off time, he cherishes spending time with his wife Jennifer and their hound mix Elvis. As a family, they enjoy taking road trips, visiting new places and meeting new people along the way.

Yu Wang– Data Management Analyst II

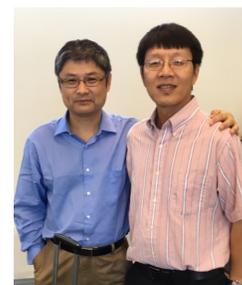
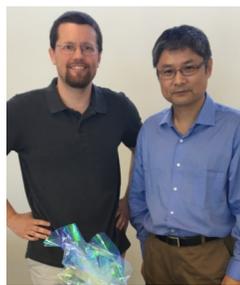
Joined the Department of Biostatistics as a Data Management Analyst II on May 19, 2017. Yu is working with Drs. Fei Zou and Susan McGorray in support of research collaboration with the UF Health Cancer Center. Yu earned a Bachelor of Science degree at Beijing Forestry University, located in China. After graduation, he spent two years at a pharmaceutical company, Novartis, in Beijing. Yu later returned to school and earned his Master's degree in biostatistics at the University of Florida in May 2017. During his second MS year, Yu worked as a part-time biostatistician for the Department of Community Health and Family Medicine at UF. In his free time, Yu likes traveling and fishing. He also enjoys replicating some of his favorite dishes that he enjoys from restaurants.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special acknowledgements to our departing faculty and staff:

Mary Bancroft
Dr. Amy Cantrell
Si Chen
Dr. Eben Kenah
Dr. Xiaomin Lu
Dr. Faming Liang
Dr. Fei Zou
Linda Vostrejs

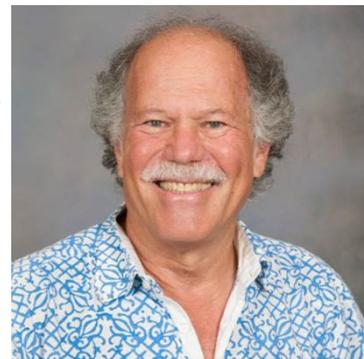


ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

Professor Ira Longini named as a UF Research Foundation Professor

The University of Florida Research Foundation has named 34 faculty members as UFRF Professors for 2017-2020. The recognition goes to faculty who have a distinguished current record of research and a strong research agenda that is likely to lead to continuing distinction in their fields.

“Faculty chosen for UFRF Professorships have a proven record of research and scholarship and the potential for even more success in the future,” said David Norton, UF’s vice president for research. “History has shown that by investing in these outstanding faculty, we can generate significant return in research discoveries, scholarship and technology transfer.”



The UFRF Professors were recommended by their college deans based on nominations from their department chairs, a personal statement and an evaluation of their recent research accomplishments as evidenced by publications in scholarly journals, external funding, honors and awards, development of intellectual property and other measures appropriate to their field of expertise. In many colleges, the selection process is conducted by a special faculty committee. The three-year award includes a \$5,000 annual salary supplement and a one-time \$3,000 grant. The professorships are funded from the university’s share of royalty and licensing income on UF-generated products.

Dr. Longini was chosen as the professor for the College of Public Health and Health Professions.

Professor Susmita Datta: Book Publication



Dr. Susmita Datta, Professor in the Department of Biostatistics, recently had her book, *Statistical Analysis of Proteomics, Metabolomics, and Lipidomics Data Using Mass Spectrometry*, published by Springer. This book presents an overview of computational and statistical design and analysis of mass spectrometry-based proteomics, metabolomics, and lipidomics data. This contributed volume provides an introduction to the special aspects of statistical design and analysis with mass spectrometry data for the new omic sciences. The text discusses common aspects of design and analysis between and across all (or most) forms of mass spectrometry, while also providing special examples of application with the most common forms of mass spectrometry. Also covered are applications of computational mass spectrometry not only in clinical study but also in the

interpretation of omics data in plant biology studies.

Omics research fields are expected to revolutionize biomolecular research by the ability to simultaneously profile many compounds within either patient blood, urine, tissue, or other biological samples. Mass spectrometry is one of the key analytical techniques used in these new omic sciences. Liquid chromatography mass spectrometry, time-of-flight data, and Fourier transform mass spectrometry are but a selection of the measurement platforms available to the modern analyst. Thus in practical proteomics or metabolomics, researchers will not only be confronted with new high dimensional data types—as opposed to the familiar data structures in more classical genomics—but also with great variation between distinct types of mass spectral measurements derived from different platforms, which may complicate analyses, comparison, and interpretation of results.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

Professor Somnath Datta: President of IISA for Year 2018



In November of 2016, Dr. Somnath Datta was elected as President of the International Indian Statistical Association (IISA) for the year 2018. The IISA is a non-profit organization with the key objective of promoting education, research and application of statistical and probability throughout the world with special emphasis on the Indian subcontinent. Dr. Datta has been involved with the organization for many years and is looking forward to his new role as the President. As Dr. Datta prepares to join the leadership team, he will serve on the Executive Committee for the year 2017 as the president-elect. He will also serve the year after as the past-president.

Professor, Sam Wu and Associate Professor, Yang Yang Awarded UF Term Professorship Awards

Congratulations to two University of Florida Department of Biostatistics faculty members, Sam Wu, Ph.D., and Yang Yang, Ph.D., who received UF Term Professorship Award. University Term Professorship Awards are awarded to tenure-track faculty members to recognize and reward faculty achievements. The purpose of these awards is to recognize recent contributions and provide incentives for continued excellence.

Each of the UF Term Professorship Awards lasts three years. Recipients receive an annual salary supplement of \$5,000 during the course of the award.

Dr. Michael Perri, Dean, College of Public Health and Health Professions, makes the final determination of award of term professorships with input from chairs as well as an assessment of academic accomplishment.



Dr. John Kairalla promoted to Research Associate Professor

Congratulations to Dr. John Kairalla who was recently promoted to Research Associate Professor. Dr. Kairalla joined the department of Biostatistics in June of 2013. Since this time, he has excelled in all aspects. He received his PhD in Biostatistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His areas of expertise



include clinical trial design/ implementation/ analysis, adaptive clinical trials, linear models, and power analysis techniques. He has served as PI, Co-I, and statistician on multiple NIH, VA, and AHRQ funded projects in a wide range of areas including Nursing, Health economics, rehabilitation research, neurology, and nephrology. His current funded work is focused on aging research and childhood cancer. He is a Senior Statistician at the NCI funded Children's Oncology Group Statistics and Data Center (COG SDC), where he develops and reviews concept proposals, trial design, sample size calculations, and develops/ implements safety and efficacy monitoring rules for implements nationwide and worldwide clinical trials in the area of childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) including therapeutic treatment and neurocognitive outcomes. He has taught courses on Applied Biostatistics, Design and Conduct of Clinical Trials, and Biostatistical Computing.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

PhD Student, Tyler Grimes, Receives Travel Award



Congratulations to first year PhD biostatistics student, Tyler Grimes, as he has received a travel award from the International Society for Computational Biology, to attend the 25th Conference on Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology and the 16th European Conference on Computational Biology.

This conference was held in Prague, Czech Republic from July 21 to July 25, 2017. Tyler's paper, titled *Predicting Survival Times for Neuroblastoma Patients Using RNA-Seq Expression Profiles*, is joint research with Drs. Susmita Datta, Alejandro Walker, and Somnath Datta. The paper analyzes a challenge data set for

Critical Assessment of Massive Data Analysis track. The paper also received the highest level of award which includes travel compensation and the opportunity to give a 20 minute presentation during the conference. Based on the presentation, Tyler had the chance to compete for a one-year membership to F1000Prime, a free journal publication in F1000Research, and the prestigious CAMDA trophy.

Dr. Babette Brumback Elected as a Member of ENAR Regional Committee

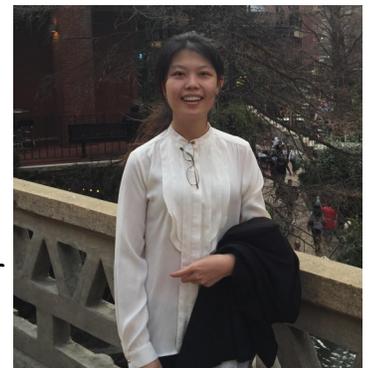
Congratulations for Dr. Babette Brumback who was recently elected as a member of the International Biometric Society's Eastern North American Region (ENAR) Regional Committee (RECOM). Dr. Brumback will serve as a RECOM member for the 3-year term 2018-2020. The committee consists of nine members elected to three year terms, with three new members elected each year.

The International Biometric Society is an international society for the advancement of biological science through the development of quantitative theories and the application, development and dissemination of effective mathematical and statistical techniques. ENAR is a subdivision of this society and includes portions of the United States and Canada. As a Regional Committee member, Dr. Brumback will participate in committee meetings held during the ENAR Spring Meetings and the summer Joint Statistical Meetings. She will contribute to the oversight of the biometric affairs of the region and will be asked to lead and/or work on specific ENAR initiatives that are undertaken during her term.



Jingnan Zhang, Ph.D, Named PPHP 2017 Outstanding Alumni

Jingnan Zhang, Ph.D., was recently named as one of the thirteen College of Public Health and Health Professions', outstanding alumni for the year 2017. Dr. Zhang received her doctorate in biostatistics from the department in 2016. She is currently a biostatistician at Pfizer. She resolves statistical challenges in supporting large molecule drug development, ensuring the quality of biotechnology medicinal products, which leads to high quality medications for patients. She provides expertise on how to use statistics for a variety of activities required during biotechnology product development, such as equivalence tests for biosimilar products, stability analysis for laboratory test shelf life and critical process parameters for product development.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

Dr. Somnath Datta Receives Dean's Citation Paper Award

Dr. Somnath Datta, Professor, was selected as the Dean's Citation Paper Award winner for the Department of Biostatistics. This award is given by the College of Public Health and Health Professions to acknowledge innovation and excellence in research. Dr. Datta was the senior author of the paper titled *A novel rank-sum test for clustered data when the number of subjects in a group within a cluster is informative*. This paper was published in the June 2016 issue of the popular international journal, *Biometrics*, with co-author Dr. Sandipan Dutta.



Citation:

Dutta, S. and Datta, S. A novel rank-sum test for clustered data when the number of subjects in a group within a cluster is informative. *Biometrics*, 72, 432-440 (2016). PMID: PMC4870168

Special Invited Speakers at IISA 2017

Drs. Somnath Datta, Susmita Datta and Peihua Qiu have all been invited to the International Indian Statistical Association (IISA) 2017 International Conference on Statistics as special invited speakers. This conference will be held December 28-30, 2017 in Hyderabad, India. As a special invited speaker, they will be tasked with presenting a 45 minute lecture during one of the conference sessions.



Dr. Samuel Wu Receives NIH Grant

Dr. Samuel Wu (PI) from Department of Biostatistics, Dr. Shigang Chen (co-PI) from Department of Computer and Information Science and Engineering and Dr. Michael Okun (co-I) from Department of Neurology, received an R01 grant from NIH/NIGMS. In responding to the Big Data to Knowledge (BD2K) initiative, the proposed research will combine expertise from biostatistics, computer science, cyber-security, and medical practice to develop data sharing technologies. The interdisciplinary project entitled, "New Statistical and Computing Technologies for Breaking the Barrier to Medical Data Sharing," will develop new methods of data masking that promise to allow free exchange of medical information with strong privacy protection.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Successful Biostatistics Workshop

The department hosted a successful workshop titled, Statistical Inference for Biomedical Big Data, on April 7th and 8th. The workshop brought together prominent statisticians to discuss and foster the cutting –edge developments of statistical theory, methods, and tools for biomedical big data analysis. The workshop provided the opportunity for faculty and graduate students to interact with the top researchers and identify important directions for future research.

In addition to the three keynote and 23 invited speaker presentations, students and postdoc submitters had the opportunity to compete for four travel awards and three paper awards. There was also the opportunity for students to display a poster during the poster session.

For more information about the workshop and to view photos of the event, please visit the website: <http://biostat.ufl.edu/seminars/biostatistics-workshop/>



UF Plays Key Role in Trial for Successful Ebola Vaccine

Researchers at the University of Florida have played an integral role in the vaccine trial’s execution, finding that it is 100 percent effective at preventing Ebola when given 10 or more days prior to exposure to the deadly virus. The study findings were published today (Dec. 22) in The Lancet.

“The goal was to estimate the vaccine efficacy from a phase III randomized vaccine trial,” said Ira Longini, a professor in the department of biostatistics at the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions and the College of Medicine and director of the UF Center for Statistics and Quantitative Infectious Diseases.

The 2014 Ebola virus outbreak was by far the largest and most lethal Ebola outbreak ever recorded. Transmission occurred primarily in three West African countries: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus infected nearly 29,000 people in the region, with more than 11,000 deaths occurring due to the disease.

Longini, who is also a member of UF’s Emerging Pathogens Institute, was a key figure in the design of the Ebola vaccine trial and the analysis of its statistical data. The trial was called “Ebola ça suffit!” and it was the first successful phase III trial for an Ebola vaccine. Having successfully completed phase III indicates it has been tested on hundreds of subjects and proven both safe and effective. Natalie Dean, a postdoctoral researcher in the department of biostatistics, worked with Longini on both the design and analysis of the vaccine trial.

According to the report, vaccinating only 52.1 percent of the participants was still 70.1 percent effective in preventing the spread of Ebola.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Peihua Qiu, Plenary Speaker at the STU Hunter Research Conference 2017

The annual STU Hunter Research Conference is a high-profile research conference to honor one of the pioneers in applied statistics, Professor Stu Hunter. Each year, the conference invites 6 plenary speakers to present their research on topics that are considered fundamentally important to applied statistical research and applications. It also invites about 60 other active researchers in different areas of applied statistics around the world to participate. The conference lasts for three days, and it spends a half-day on intensive communication and discussion about the research presented by each plenary speaker. This year's STU Hunter Research Conference was held in Copenhagen, Denmark from Sunday March 5 to Wednesday March 8, 2017.



Dr. Peihua Qiu of the UF Department of Biostatistics was invited to the conference as a plenary speaker. He made a 90-minute presentation, titled *Jump Regression, Image Processing and Quality Control*, followed by a 90-minute discussion from three discussants and the general audience. In his presentation, Dr. Qiu described broad applications of image comparison and monitoring. He then introduced major statistical tools for describing and handling image data. In closing, he provided his own perspectives on new research directions and problems. Dr. Qiu's presentation and his research in the related areas were well received by conference participants. Soon, the presentation will be published in the journal *Quality Engineering* as a discussion paper.

Summer Picnic 2017

On April, 29, 2017, the department hosted its annual summer picnic. All department faculty, staff, students, visitors and their families were invited to attend. The turnout for the picnic was great with over 60% of the department present.



This year the picnic took place at Drs. Somnath and Susmita Datta's home here in Gainesville, Florida. The same as prior years, the potluck buffet proved to be a huge success with an endless number of international dishes.

The weather was fantastic and the company even better. Not only was this a good time for all departmental associates to mingle, it was also a great opportunity for families to meet one another.

Recent Graduates obtain prestige jobs following graduation

Dr. Sinjini Sikdar recently graduated with her Ph.D. in Biostatistics. She successfully defended her dissertation in June 2017, entitled "*Statistical Methods for Analyzing Genomics Data*". She was mentored by Professor, Susmita Datta. After graduation, Dr. Sikdar joined the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) as a post-doctoral fellow in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Dr. Jing Liu recently graduated with his Ph.D. in Biostatistics. Mentored by Dr. Sam Wu and Xiaomin Lu, he successfully defended his dissertation entitled "*Improving Power For Testing Genetic Effects on Binary and Survival Outcomes Using Auxiliary Information*". Following graduation, Dr. Liu joined Google as a Quantitative Analyst.



Congratulations to our graduates!

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Biostatistics Career Luncheon

The Department of Biostatistics hosted a successful career luncheon on Friday, October 20, 2017 in the HPNP reception area. All of the department's faculty, Ph.D., M.S. and MPH students were invited to participate in this event. During the luncheon, students had the opportunity to meet with faculty members to discuss career development, job opportunities, academic topics, etc. The smaller and casual setting of the luncheon allowed students to have personal and detailed conversations with the faculty and fellow students. The two main objectives of the luncheon were for students to gain career and resource knowledge to better prepare for obtaining a job post-graduation and for the faculty members to gain a better understanding of the students' professional goals. The feedback from attendees was positive and both faculty and students felt that the luncheon was beneficial. The department has decided that this will be an annual event held in the fall term of each year.



Dr. Susmita Datta Gives Plenary Speech



Congratulations to Dr. Susmita Datta who was selected as a plenary speaker for the American Statistical Association's, 2017 Women in Statistics and Data Science Conference. Dr. Datta's plenary speech titled *Making Your Mark*, was 75 minutes in length and was delivered on October 19, 2017 in La Jolla, California. The audience was a combination of professionals and students from academia, industry, and the government working in statistics and data science. The conference aims to bring together these groups to "Share WISDOM" (Women in Statistics, Data science, and -Omics) and highlight the achievements and career interests of women in statistics and data science.

PHHP 2017 Convocation

The UF College of Public Health and Health Professions celebrated outstanding students and graduates at the college's annual convocation ceremony April 29, 2017.

The college's departments and programs presented students with awards and scholarships. Dr. Peihua Qiu, Chair for the department of biostatistics, had the opportunity to present two awards during this ceremony.

Shihua Chen, Master's student, biostatistics, was the recipient of the M.S. Award and Yeonil Kim, Doctoral student, biostatistics, was the receipt of the Ph.D. Award.



Online Master of Science in Biostatistics Begins

The department was excited to kick off the new Online Master of Science in Biostatistics program which began Fall 2017 term. This online program is the first of its kind in the nation. The inaugural class consists of 26, both domestic and international, students. The program is designed to facilitate the development of a strong theoretical foundation in biostatistics, a broad-based understanding of biostatistical methods, and advanced skills in data analysis. The goal is to provide high-quality teaching and helpful resources to ensure the online experience is a positive one. The department is committed to providing top-notch education and research contributions to biostatistics.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Zhiguang “Caleb” Huo Appointed as Director of the BCL

Dr. Caleb Huo, Assistant Professor, was recently appointed as the Director of the Biostatistics Consulting Lab. The BCL offers researcher statisticians who are highly skilled and knowledgeable in statistical and data-related services. Services include, but are not limited to, the development of design, measurement and analysis strategies for research studies, statistical analyses and interpretation of experimental results, methodological and statistical review of manuscripts, generation of graphics and written summaries to enhance presentation of study results and database creation, management and cleaning, and manual entry of data into databases. As director of this program, Dr. Huo is not only the main point of contact but will also be responsible for determining the scope of a project, estimating a fee schedule, providing a timeline, etc...



For more information about the BCL, please visit our website: <http://biostat.ufl.edu/consulting/fee-schedule/>

Upcoming Additions to the Department

The department is happy to announce that as of January 1, 2018, Drs. Rhonda Bacher and Subha Guha will join the team as the newest faculty members. Dr. Bacher obtained her Ph.D. in statistics with an emphasis in biostatistics from the University of Wisconsin. Her research interests include developing statistical methods for normalization of single-cell RNA-sequencing data, single cell and bulk RNA-seq time course data and QTL mapping. Dr. Subha Guha obtained his Ph.D. in statistics from the Ohio State University. His



research interests include Bayesian modeling, statistical computing, nonparametric Bayesian methods, highdimensional inference, cancer genomics, connectomics, neuroscience, independent component analysis, spatial statistics, hidden Markov models, survival analysis, MCMC simulation, generalized linear models, computational methods for Big Data. The department is thrilled to have Drs. Bacher and Guha join the team.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IISA 2018 Conference

The Department of Biostatistics is hosting the 2018 International Indian Statistical Society's annual conference. This conference will be held May 17– 20, 2018 at the HPNP Complex at the University of Florida. For more information please visit the website: <http://iisa2018.biostat.ufl.edu/>



SEMINAR SERIES

January 2017

Sharon Browning, Associate Professor

Department of Biostatistics
University of Washington

“Identity by Descent in Populations”

February 2017

Sudipto Banerjee, Professor and Chair

Department of Biostatistics
University of California, Los Angeles

“High Dimensional Bayesian Geostatistics”

March 2017

Arnold J. Stromberg, Professor and Chair

Department of Statistics
University of Kentucky

“Feasible Solutions Algorithms: Concepts and Grant Applications:

April 2017

Youyi Fong, Associate Member

Vaccine and Infectious Disease
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

“The Use of Kernel Methods for Regression, AUC
-based Classification and Treatment Selection”

June 2017

Ming-Hui Chen, Professor

Division of Biostatistics, Department of Psychiatry
Columbia University

“A Partition Weighted Kernel (PWK) Method for Estimating Marginal Likelihoods with Applications”

November 2017

Ding-Geng Chen, Professor

Director of Statistical Development and Consultation
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

“From Study Design to Statistical Analysis: A Bayesian Prospective on Intervention Research”

Michael G. Hudgens, Professor

Department of Biostatistics
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

“Causal Inference in the Presence of Interference”

Tony Barr, President

A Model of Reality Inc.

”The Search for Understanding: A Perspective from SAS Creator”



POSTDOC

Kam Lun “Tim” Tsang joined the department on October 20, 2016 as a Post Doc Associate to Dr. Ira Longini. Dr. Tsang was awarded a Ph.D. degree from the University of Hong Kong in May 2016. His main field of study was Epidemiology and Infectious Diseases and Environmental Health Hazards.

Alejandro Riveros Walker joined the department on November 18, 2016 as a Post Doc Associate to Dr. Somnath Datta and Dr. Susmita Datta. Dr. Walker was awarded a Ph.D. degree from the University of Florida in August 2014. His dissertation title was *Genetic Architecture of juvenile wood density traits in Loblolly Pine with pedigree and genomics additive and non-additive relationship matrices*.

Diana Rojas joined the department on August 16, 2017 as a Post Doc Associate to Dr. Ira Longini. Dr. Rojas is a Medical Doctor and was awarded a Ph.D. degree in Epidemiology from the University of Florida in August 2017. Her main field of study is Epidemiology and transmission dynamics of arboviruses in Latin America and the impact of different interventions in prevention and control of arboviruses.

DEPARTURES

Natalie Dean joined the department on January 16, 2015 as a Post Doc Associate to Dr. Ira Longini. Dr. Dean was awarded a Ph.D. degree from the Harvard University in May 2014. She recently accepted a position with the department as Assistant Professor as of July 14, 2017.

VISITING SCHOLARS RESEARCH PROGRAM

THE DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED A VISITING RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM IN 2015

Commenced

- **Wendong Li**, invited by Dr. Peihua Qiu is a 12 month visitor from Shanghai, China, East China Normal University.

Concluded

- **Nasim Vahabi**, invited by Dr. Somnath Datta, is a 6 month visitor from Tehran, Iran, Tehran University of Medical Sciences.
- **Zhiqiong Wang**, invited by Dr. Peihua Qiu, is a 12 month visitor from Beijing, China, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- **Sican Xiong**, invited by Dr. Fei Zou, is an 18 month visitor from People’s Republic of China, Wuhan University.

RECENT GRADUATES

Doctor of Philosophy

Jing Liu, Ph.D.- Mentor: Sam Wu, Ph.D. and Xiaomin Lu, Ph.D.

Thesis Dissertation: *Improving Power For Testing Genetic Effects On Binary And Survival Outcomes Using Auxiliary Information*

Yushuf Sharker, Ph.D.- Mentor: Eben Kehan, Ph.D.

Thesis Dissertation: *Pairwise Accelerated Failure Time Models For Infectious Disease Transmission Data*

Sinjini Sikdar, Ph.D.- Mentor: Susmita Datta, Ph.D.

Thesis Dissertation: *Statistical Methods for Analyzing Genomics Data*

Suwa Xu, Ph.D.- Mentor: Faming Liang, Ph.D.

Thesis Dissertation: *Learning High-Dimensional Bayesian Networks for General Types of Random Variables*

Master of Science

Shihua Chen, M.S.– Mentor: Eben Kenah, Ph.D.

Yiqing Chen, M.S.– Mentor: Yueh-Yun Chi, Ph.D.

Kuei-Hsun Chiu, M.S.– Mentor: John Kairalla, Ph.D.

Huiyin Lu, M.S.– Mentor: Babette Brumback, Ph.D.

Guanhong Miao, M.S.– Mentor:

Yang Wang, M.S.– Mentor: Baiming Zou, Ph.D.

Yu Wang, M.S.– Mentor: Qinglin Pei, Ph.D.

Peng Xiao, M.S.– Mentor: Susan McGorray, Ph.D.

Rachel Zahigian, M.S.– Mentor:

Zhennan Zhu, M.S.– Mentor: Arlene Naranjo, Ph.D.

Chuan Zuo, M.S.– Mentor: Yang Yang, Ph.D.

Master of Public Health

Kaitlyn Dickinson, MPH– Mentor: John Kairalla, Ph.D.

Hsiao chu Hsu, MPH– Mentor: Yueh-Yun Chi, Ph.D.

Chiung Wei Huang, MPH– Mentor: Susan McGorray, Ph.D.

Xiangqi Kong, MPH– Mentor: Amy Melissa Cantrell, Ph.D.

Rui Li, MPH– Mentor: Yang Yang, Ph.D.

Boya Lin, MPH– Mentor: Samuel Wu, Ph.D.

Hao Long, MPH– Mentor: Eben Kenah, Ph.D.

Yichen Pan, MPH– Mentor: Amy Cantrell, Ph.D.



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