

## Newsletter of the South African Statistical Association (SASA)

[View this email in your browser](#)

Postal Address: SASA, PO Box 3341, Matieland, 7602 South Africa  
Website: [www.sastat.org.za](http://www.sastat.org.za)



# SASA UPDATE

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### ***Francesca Little***

You may recall that in the last newsletter when I briefly stated the goals for my year as president of SASA, I referred to how exciting it is to live in an era during which everyone is talking about data and information and about storing and extracting that information, about analyzing all the data and about making decisions based on the information contained in all this data, in short Data Science. For once (in Hal Varian's words) it is "sexy" to be a statistician and we can demand top salaries around the world. Even our Scientist colleagues at the universities are taking note of us and our skills. The hype is of course driven by the availability of "Big" data sets and the actual skills set is referred to as "Data Science" rather than Statistics. And to be quite correct, this "new" discipline is a merger of Statistics and Computer Science but then these days you cannot easily be a good statistician without being a good programmer as well.

**[Download document](#)**

## Editorial

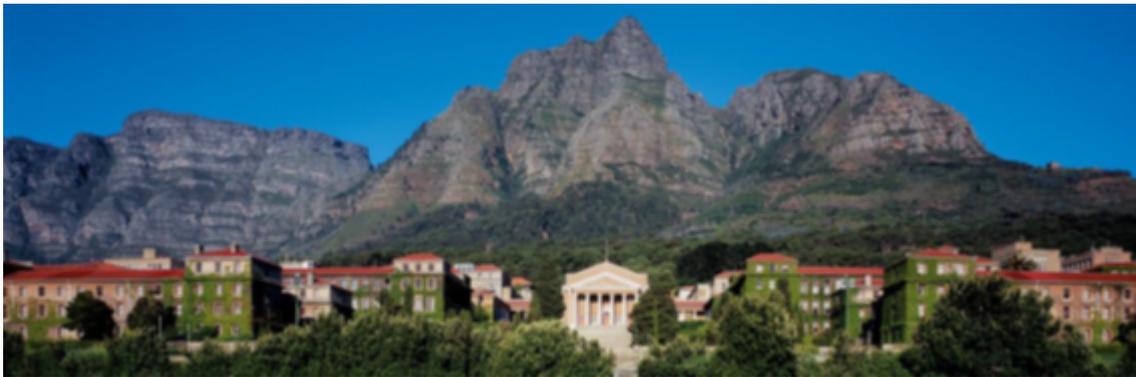
Welcome to all the new and existing SASA members!

In the president's column Francesca gives an overview of promoting the development and strengthening of both mathematical and applied statistics in South Africa. This issue has information on the 2015 SASA conference to be hosted by the University of Cape Town in November this year. The Multivariable Data Analysis Group (MDAG) reports on activities. Some feedback from the chapters are summarised. The Education Committee gives feedback and the post graduate competition is announced. The Young Statisticians' representative on the EC, Dr Jaco Visagie, introduces himself.

Prof Timothy Dunne, a person who was very active in the Education Committee, sadly passed away. Also take note of the calls for the Sichel medal, fellows and honorary members, and a thought leader.

Keep well - Mardi

For contact details, submissions and advertising [click here](#)



## SASA 2016 Conference First Announcement

The University of Cape Town looks forward to welcoming the Statistics community, including people from academia and industry, to Cape Town for the SASA 2016 conference.

[\*\*Download document\*\*](#)

## Welcome - new members!

Our community is growing - click here to see the list of our new members. Especially welcome to our new students members. [See who the new members are](#)

## SASA Chapter activities for 2016

Our regional Chapters are active - please [read more](#) about the interesting activities in your own region.



### A sad farewell

Tim Dunne died on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> April in a car accident. Through his untimely death at the age of 67, the South African academic community has lost a very special man who will be remembered for his intellect, his integrity, his humour, and his generosity.

[Read more](#)

## Call for Thought Leader Award

SASA will once again award a Thought Leader Award in 2016 to one of its members due to the generous sponsorship from SAS South Africa. A Thought Leader is a person who has made an impact within the South African statistical community across a wide range of activities and has made significant contributions in academia, industry, government and elsewhere. Contributions and activities are evaluated over the last 10 years for the nominated person.

The criteria include contributions and impacts made in *Leadership, Knowledge Generation, Human Capital Development, Impact of the Work and Research and Attracting Funding*.

Note the criteria have been compiled for the evaluation of the contributions by academics and practitioners in industry, and favours neither one. We invite SASA members to submit nominations for the Thought Leader for 2016. Please also submit all supporting documents for some or all of the criteria listed, including full CV, of the nominated person with your nomination to Prof James Allison, [James.Allison@nwu.ac.za](mailto:James.Allison@nwu.ac.za), before 15 August 2016.

[Read more](#)

## A new young statistician – Jaco Visagie



As you are probably aware, SASA recently created a new portfolio called “the chairperson of the young statistician’s network”. Through a polling process I was nominated and, with a little luck, was ultimately voted in and appointed to serve on the executive committee in this capacity. Hi, my name is Jaco and I would like to introduce myself! I am 29 years old (which apparently qualifies me as “young”)..... [Read more about Jaco and this exiting new portfolio](#)

[Jaco.Visagie@up.ac.za](mailto:Jaco.Visagie@up.ac.za)

---

## Education news

### Committee for 2016

The committee, chaired by Prof. Delia North (UKZN), convened for their annual meeting on 13 January 2016. The 2016 education committee and their respective portfolios are ***shown in the table.***

### SASA Education Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> year Scholarship and Bursary winners

The Education Committee is proud to announce the 2<sup>nd</sup> year SASA Scholarship and Bursary recipients.

This year the scholarship and bursary, was awarded to the applicant who performed outstandingly well in their first and second year of study. The recipient of this award for 2016

was Mr Cebelihle Zwane from the University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN). The Education Committee wishes him everything of the best for the future. Two further bursary awards were also made to deserving students. Congratulations to Mr Spiwe Mphuthi from the University of Pretoria (UP) and Mr Christopher Dunderdale from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) who received these awards. We, the Education Committee would like to congratulate all the recipients and we look forward to your active participation in SASA activities in the future.



The 2<sup>nd</sup> year bursary winner, Mr Dunderdale from NMMU, receives his award from Dr Goodall (left) and HOD Prof Sharp (right).



The 2<sup>nd</sup> year bursary winner, Mr Mphuthi from UP, receives his award from Dr Crafford (Left) and Dr Kleyn (Right).



SASA Education Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> year scholarship and bursary winner, Mr Zwane from UKZN, receives his award from HOD Professor Murry (left) and Professor North (right).

**Third Year Competition sponsored by SAS,  
ICCSSA and SASA**

Once again, the competition for both the scholarship and the bursaries was tough but the Education committee identified the three most worthy recipients: Mr Dylan Botha of the University of Stellenbosch (US) won the scholarship (sponsored by SAS) with exceptional third year results while Ms Michelle Alexander (UP) and Mr Khayelihle Mfeka (UKZN) received the bursaries (sponsored by ICCSSA and SASA respectively). Congratulations to the winners. The SASA Education committee wishes you all the best for the year of study ahead. In addition, the SASA Education Committee would like to express their sincere gratitude to SAS and ICCSSA for their generous contributions to the awards.

***Congratulations to all the winners!***

## 2016 SASA Postgraduate Paper Competition,



**sponsored by Stats SA**

It is with great excitement that the SASA Education Committee hereby announces the 2016 SASA Postgraduate Paper Competition! This competition is open to all students enrolled for Masters or PhD's in Statistics at South African tertiary institutions. Both full and part-time students are eligible.

Stats SA will be funding the competition as part of their drive to provide financial assistance to deserving students who show promise and diligence in their statistical work. A person entering the Postgraduate Paper Competition may submit their paper to a journal but **only after the competition i.e. only papers that have not previously been submitted to a journal may be entered in the competition.** *Note however that this restriction does not apply to the SASA Conference Proceedings, i.e. a paper entered for this competition may simultaneously be submitted to the SASA Conference Proceedings.*

Three prizes will be awarded, subject to the adjudicators' discretion. Two of the prizes may be from any statistical sub-discipline and one prize will be reserved for Official Statistics, on special request from the sponsors. The first author of the best three papers, as decided by the judges, will be sponsored to present his/her paper at the 2016 SASA Conference at the University of Cape Town. Sponsorship will include travel (within SA), accommodation

and conference fees. In addition, the overall winner will receive R14 500, the runner-up will receive R10 500 and the third prize will be R8 000. (In the event of a tie, prize monies will be adjusted accordingly) The SASA Education Committee will handle the adjudication process. The judges' decision will be final and there will be no correspondence regarding the decision.

## Call for nominations for Honorary Members and Fellows of the Association

According to the constitution of the South African Statistical Association individuals can be elected to the status of Honorary Member or Fellow of the association. These are described as follows:

### **Honorary Member:**

Life-long honorary membership of the Association can be bestowed on an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to the knowledge of statistics or to the advancement of the Association and who has retired from his/her ordinary position.

### **Fellow:**

Any enfranchised member who has made outstanding contributions to the advancement of statistical science may be nominated and elected Fellow of the Association. In the selection of Fellows, the nature and quality of the candidate's contribution to the advancement of statistical sciences shall be taken into consideration.

Nominations for Honorary members and Fellows, appropriately motivated, and put forward by at least two enfranchised members of the association, should be submitted confidentially, before 15 August 2016 to the Chair of the SASA Fellowship Committee,

**Prof James Allison**, James.Allison@nwu.ac.za,

**Multivariate Data Analysis Group (MDAG)**

It is with great pleasure that we can announce the re-election of our Multivariate Data Analysis Group (MDAG) Chairperson, Professor Sugnet Lubbe, for the 2015-2019 term. Since the formal establishment of our special interest group in November 2013, Professor Lubbe has been actively involved in the sourcing of new members and scheduling of MDAG events, also successfully applying for affiliation with the International Federation of Classification Societies (IFCS). Under her leadership MDAG was also invited to host the Correspondence Analysis and Related Methods (CARME) 2019 conference in Cape Town, South Africa. MDAG is delighted by this opportunity to host such a prestigious academic event.

We wish her all the best for her new term as elected MDAG Chairperson and we look forward to assisting her in strengthening MDAG relationships on local and international forums, as well as creating awareness of our diverse research interests.

**Upcoming international events:**

MDAG will be represented in Nevşehir Turkey at the International conference on information complexity and statistical modelling in high dimensions with applications (IC-SMHD-2016) from 18-21 May 2016. The conference will be attended by the following MDAG members: Prof Tertius de Wet (Stellenbosch University), Prof Niël le Roux (Stellenbosch University), Prof Sugnet Lubbe (University of Cape Town) and Prof Danie Uys (Stellenbosch University).

## THE HERBERT SICHEL MEDAL

### Call for nominations and submissions

---

The Herbert Sichel Medal is awarded annually to the member (or members) of the Association who has (have) published the best statistical paper during the previous year. Accordingly, members are invited to nominate or submit papers for consideration for the 2016 Herbert Sichel Medal.

[Read more](#)

The winner(s) of the Herbert Sichel Medal will be announced at the 2016 Annual Conference of the Association, which will be hosted by the University of Cape Town during November.

## **Announcement:**

A pdf version of this newsletter will be available on the SASA webpage.

### **Last date of submission for news items are as follows:**

May newsletter: 1 April

September newsletter: 1 August

December/January newsletter: 1 December

# Hadoop brings big data. SAS brings big insight.

What good are all those massive Hadoop data sets if you can't analyze them all? Or if it takes you weeks just to get the results? Combining the power of SAS® Analytics with Hadoop lets you go from big data to brilliant decisions in seconds. And it all happens in a single, easy-to-use, interactive environment so you get faster answers with greater insight.



Learn more about SAS® solutions for Hadoop  
[sas.com/hadoopsolutions](http://sas.com/hadoopsolutions)

For more information please contact us.

**Website:** [www.sas.com/sa](http://www.sas.com/sa)

**Email:** [intouch@sas.com](mailto:intouch@sas.com)

**Tel:** +27 11 713 3400

Follow us on



@SAS\_Africa



SAS Africa

  
THE POWER TO KNOW.

SAS and all other SAS Institute Inc. product or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of SAS Institute Inc. in the USA and other countries. ® indicates USA registration. Other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective companies. © 2015 SAS Institute Inc. All rights reserved. 51436708.0815

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)