



SASA NEWS/SASV NUUS

Newsletter of the South African Statistical Association • Nuusbrief van die Suid-Afrikaanse Statistiese Vereniging
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SASA burns bright

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This winter, I expect that many academics will be introducing exam questions about the probability of load-shedding on the coldest nights! In these (somewhat darker than usual) times it is heart-warming to hear of positive developments such as the admission of our Multivariate Data Analysis Group (MDAG) to the International Federation of Classification Societies (IFCS). I would like to take this opportunity to repeat my congratulations to this group, and to encourage all members to give serious consideration to the many advantages and opportunities arising from the establishment of a special interest group. An overview of these advantages, as well as an invitation to submit a proposal, can be found on p.11 of this newsletter.

A further light in the dark is the fact that a significant portion of the generous NRF grant for the crisis in academic statistics remains available to applicants in a wide variety of categories, such as the "supervision knowledge share" and "mentorship program" initiatives discussed in the March newsletter, which aim to achieve a better distribution of expert knowledge across generations and even continents. Further calls will be sent out in the coming months. These calls are inherently representative of the SASA vision, and I appeal to

all members to demonstrate their commitment to our objectives by finding ways to make use of this excellent opportunity to nurture and develop academic staff and students at their institution.

As always, the brightest light on the horizon remains the annual SASA conference, which promises to be an outstanding event, boasting an even greater than usual international flavour. If you haven't yet started planning your attendance, it's time to review your calendar to make sure that you don't miss the chance to rub shoulders with your fellow statisticians at the flagship event of the year.

James Allison

"This winter, I expect that many academics will be introducing exam questions about the probability of load-shedding on the coldest nights!"

Dear SASA members

Welcome to all the new and existing SASA members!

This issue has the latest information on the 2015 SASA conference to be hosted by the University of Pretoria together with StatsSA in November this year. It also contains an invitation to host our SASA 2015 official guests at your Institution/Department. Please take note of deadlines for papers and the proceedings for this conference.

The Multivariable Data Analysis Group (MDAG) reports on activities in this issue. It is part of Special Interest Groups within SASA of which you can read more here. The Education Committee gives feedback. Two young statisticians report how they experience their jobs and research. Prof Leon Vivier, former from UP sadly passed away.

The seminar program of Stellenbosch University is included. Also take note of the calls for the Sichel medal, fellows and honorary members, and a thought leader.

Keep well.

Mardi

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The Newsletter is an informal collection of news items and short articles of interest.

The Newsletter will appear in March, June, September and December.

Submission deadlines:

Issue	Deadline Date
March	1 February
June	1 May
September	1 August
December	1 November

The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the SA Statistical Association or the editor of the Newsletter.

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Invitation to host our SASA2015 official guests at your Institution/Department

The SASA EC and the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria have again invited international guests as plenary speakers to the 2015 annual conference, to be held at the University of Pretoria from the 29th November to the 3rd December. These speakers are available for travel to other institutions during their visit to South Africa. One of the speakers is Prof Din Chen (<http://www.statistics.com/dr-din-chen>), Biostatistician, Rochester University, USA, who will be available for visits in the week leading up to the conference. The other speakers and their itineraries are still to be confirmed, so do watch the conference website for details.

Departments and Institutions who wish to invite our official guests may contact Francesca Little at Francesca.little@uct.ac.za before 14 August 2015.

It is expected of hosts to book his/her accommodation and arrange all transport and to entertain them in true South African style during his/her visit. His/Her domestic flight costs will be arranged and covered by SASA. The details of this will be communicated to host Departments at a later stage.

New members

Ms O Ajayi
 University of KwaZulu-Natal
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Mr H Brydon
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Prof A Kijko
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Prof S Meintanis
 National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
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 North-West University
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South African Statistical Association (SASA) Conference

Sunday 29 November 2015 – Wednesday 2 December 2015, Workshops on 28, 29 November & 3, 4 December 2015
57th Annual Conference of the South African Statistical Association
Engineering III Building, Hatfield Campus, UP

The South African Statistical Association (SASA) Conference 2015 LOC is pleased to announce the 57th Annual Conference of the South African Statistical Association. The South African Statistical Association (SASA) Conference will be held on Sunday 29 November 2015 – Wednesday 2 December 2015 with workshops taking place on 28, 29 November & 3, 4 December at Engineering III Building, Hatfield Campus, University of Pretoria.

About SASA 2105

The South African Statistical Association's annual conference is hosted by a different institution each year. The Department of Statistics, University of Pretoria has volunteered to host in 2015 together with StatsSA who co-host every 4 years.

Three reasons to come to Pretoria:

1. It is the South African Statistical Conference 2015 and it promises to be a rewarding experience. The line-up of speakers, both national and international is impressive.
2. The Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria is having its 90th birthday of its first statistics module and although being the oldest statistics department in South Africa, the vibe is still young and the sideshows will create a party-like mood.
3. The conference format is designed to stimulate research and human capital development – so this is the place where you can source new ideas, create contacts and at least make a list of resolutions for your research in 2016.

Conference Format

The Conference will address a range of critically important issues and themes relating to South African Statistical community. Besides plenary speakers including some of the leading thinkers in these areas, the conference will also have parallel special sessions with mini-plenary speakers, contributed talks, poster sessions, research

review discussions and a young statistician's stream.

The LOC has embarked on changing the previous format of the conference for 2015 in order to encourage high quality contributions by the 300-400 delegates who attend every year. We anticipate approximately 15-20 international delegates that will be part of the plenary and parallel special sessions. A diverse group of international experts is being identified to join us at this conference so that the bar of academic excellence will be as high as international standards allow. This conference aims to promote the broad variety of statistical areas that can (and should) be studied in South Africa, and assist with the crucial development of analytical skills needed for our country. By having the international speakers present it can greatly assist to make sure that South Africa stays on top of the game of international academic trends in the field of statistics, and ensure a competitive and stimulating research- and industry-based environment for South Africa.

The Stochastic Processes Research Theme of the CoE-MaSS will be integrated with the South African Statistical Association Conference in 2015 and we are looking forward to the invited session as well as the workshop on Thursday 3 December presented by Prof Dr Gregory Levitin from the Reliability and Equipment Division, The Israel Electric Corporation Ltd.

The 2015 Conference Format

1) Three **plenary speakers** who each give 50 minutes talks during the conference to the full delegate audience. These are international guests, experts, in their field, chosen by the SASA community and are funded from conference funding. The proposed plenary speakers are:

- Prof Din Chen (<http://www.statistics.com/dr-din-chen>): Biostatistician, Rochester University, USA;
- Walter Radermacher (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>): Director General of Eurostat and Chief Statistician of the European Union;



- Dr Robert N. Rodriguez (<http://www.stat.unc.edu/faculty/rodrig.html>): SAS Institute, Senior Director, Research and Development, SAS; 2012 President, American Statistical Association.

2) **Parallel special sessions** in which a **mini-plenary speaker** is invited for each to give a 40 minute talk as the expert of that field. A chair of the special session is approached early on in the year and is responsible for funding the mini-plenary speaker (most likely, but not limited to, an international guest) for that special session. The idea is to cover all major research fields in South African Statistics' Departments as well as industry but focus them into special sessions.

This is an open call for parallel special sessions, if you are interested to organise such a session, please complete the template available on the website (www.sastat.org.za/sasa2015) Due date: 31 May 2015. **Your role as chair of the special session is:**

- To ensure that you have a discussant for your session;
- Responsible for funding to cover all the expenses of the mini-plenary speaker for the conference;
- Responsible for the travel and accommodation arrangements of the mini-plenary speaker that you approach for your special session;
- Inform the LOC of the arrangements regularly;
- You are also welcome to present a contributed talk in this session.

3) **Contributed talks:** Included in the parallel special sessions are presentations from broader South African statistical community. These talks will follow the 40 minute mini-plenary and are allocated 20 minutes each. We envisage 3-4 contributed talks per special session and you are invited to submit an abstract for one of these sessions. Please note that if your planned conference talk is not covered by these identified sessions, there is the special session named "**Statistical methodology and techniques**" that will provide a platform for these cases to ensure the most inclusivity as possible.

4) **Poster sessions:** Poster presentations consisting of short 5 minutes talks will cater for contributed papers where the maximum number of contributors exceeds the allowable time for a session. Delegates are also welcome to submit only a poster and please indicate so when submitting your abstract.

5) **Research review discussions:** At the end of each special session there will be a 20 minute discussion on all

the presented talks and posters within the parallel special session in order to facilitate a scientific discussion on the research approached in that field to enhance the research activities in that field. **Note that for the special sessions "Statistical methodology and techniques" as well as the "Young statistician's stream" a question opportunity will follow each presentation and not the research review discussion at the end of the session.** (Please note that if your planned conference talk is not covered by the identified sessions, then use the special session named "Statistical methodology and techniques".)

6) **Young statistician's stream:**

- **Presentation of 15 minutes for Doctoral students.** The importance of developing the young academics is vital and this stream allows for this. The best presentation by a student is awarded a prize. Should a Masters student wish to partake they are more than welcome but will be judged together with the Doctoral students for the best presentation competition.
- **Posters for Honours and Masters students** - poster cocktail event for all these students who will stand by their posters for questions. The best poster for an honours student and a Masters student will also receive a prize.

7) **Pre- and Post-Workshops:** Workshops will take place on Saturday 28 November 2015 and Sunday 29 November 2015 before the conference as well as Thursday 3 December 2015 and Friday 4 December 2015 after the conference.

Key Dates

- Submit Additional Special Session Proposals – 31 May 2015
- Registration Opens – July 2015
- Final Date for Submission of Abstracts – 31 August 2015
- Acceptance Notifications – 21 September 2015
- Final Day for Early Bird Registration and Payment – 1 October 2015
- Final Day for Late Registration and Payment – 30 October 2015

Conference Details

To learn more about the conference, including speakers, session formats, venue, registration, and the like, visit the conference website: <http://www.sastat.org.za/sasa2015> or contact the conference coordinator, Mrs Sonette Olivier at sasa2015@savannaskills.co.za

Proceedings of the SASA conference

SASA will once again be producing proceedings of peer-reviewed papers from its annual conference. Presenters who would like to submit contributions for review and inclusion in the proceedings are requested to take note of the following:

The deadline for submission of full paper(s) is 31 August 2015.

Instructions to authors:

All submissions must be submitted on the proceedings website (<http://www.sastat.org.za/sasa-proceedings/paper-submissions>) as a single pdf document with all figures and tables placed in their desired positions.

Authors must upload two copies of their full paper on the Conference Proceedings page: the original copy and a blinded copy with all author names, affiliations, and contact details removed.

The pdf files can be constructed from any typesetting software (including, Microsoft Word, TeX software, Scientific Workplace, etc.) and, at this stage of the submission process, the author is not required to submit the article in the exact format required by the proceedings.

Papers accepted in the proceedings must also be presented during the conference. Note: Registering a talk at the conference and submitting an article for the proceedings are two separate processes.

Authors must limit the submission to 8 pages or less.

Papers may cover all aspects of theoretical and/or applied statistics, but should contain original research.

For more details, please see the Guidelines posted on the SASA page (<http://www.sastat.org.za/sasa-proceedings/paper-submissions-guidelines>). Any other queries related to the editorial process can be directed towards Leonard Santana:

Leonard.Santana@nwu.ac.za

(w): +27 (0)18 299 4045

Once the submitted article has undergone peer review, the author will be contacted by the editor of the proceedings (Leonard Santana) via e-mail to confirm whether or not the submission has been accepted for publication; the author will then be given instructions on how to continue the submission process.

Note: In the case where the article has been accepted, the author will be asked to convert the article into LaTeX format using the Conference Proceedings template which will be made available on the website: <http://www.sastat.org.za/sasa-proceedings/paper-submissions-guidelines> (the editorial staff for the proceedings will not take any responsibility for this task).

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 2015** to the Chair of the SASA Fellowship Committee, Paul Mostert (pjmos@sun.ac.za). ■

Thought Leader Award

SASA will once again award a Thought Leader Award in 2015 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. Important aspects for each criterion are the following:

Criterion	Important aspects
Leadership	Leadership is about how many projects the person has led, in academic research and/or industry, and how many have been implemented or commercialized. Furthermore, strategic development, advisory boards, professional associations and accreditation are also important.
Knowledge Generation	Knowledge generation is about the number and type of publications, including patents, books, book chapters, articles, guidelines and policy documentation and invited key-note addresses.
Human Capital Development	Human capital development is about management, developing others and knowledge transfer, and includes post-graduate supervision and mentoring.
Impact of the Work and Research	This refers to the impact of the work related to new theory and methods developed and implemented in software packages and in industry, but also Technology Package developments, and impacts on the broader society i.e. extra curricula. Researchers H Score is also applicable if available.
Attracting Funding	This is about the ability for attracting funding for departmental or industrial research, for industrial projects and research and for generating funds for bursaries and scholarships.

We invite SASA members to submit nominations for the Thought Leader for 2015. 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 Paul Mostert, pjmos@sun.ac.za before 15 August 2015.

Prof Leon Vivier - Well-known statistician and previous UP Professor passes away

Prof Leon Vivier (77), a former professor in Statistics and Econometrics at the University of Pretoria passed away on 9 April 2015. He is survived by his wife, Hendrien, their three children and five grandchildren.

Leon Vivier was professor in Statistics and Econometrics from 1986 up to his retirement in 1999. He received a BSc degree in Statistics in 1960 and a BCom degree in 1963. Prof. Vivier followed this up with an Honours degree in Statistics in 1965, and later a MCom (Statistics) in 1969. Consequently he completed his PhD in Statistics in 1975, as well as a BCom (Hons) in Economics in 1977.

Prof Vivier started his career in 1961 as a researcher at the Central Statistics Services. Afterwards he respectively worked at the Maize Board and Sasol as a statistician. In 1969 he joined the University of Pretoria as a lecturer and was later promoted to Senior lecturer. From 1976

to 1981 Prof Vivier served as Chief Statistician at the Central Statistics Service. He followed this up with an appointment as Director at the Central Economics Advice Service. From 1986 to 1999 he was professor in Statistics and Econometrics at UP. Prof Vivier was study leader and supervisor for several master's and PhD-students. He also was an inaugural member of STATOMET, the Bureau for Statistical and Survey Methodology of the Department of Statistics.

From 1999 to 2002 Prof Vivier was involved with the economic development of the Blaauwberg Municipality and the City of Cape Town. Until recently he was very active as a consultant and primarily concentrated on training at small businesses and also acted as mentor for them. Prof Vivier was very involved in high profile projects and publications, for example the development of an inflation barometer for South Africa.

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 2015 Herbert Sichel Medal. The following rules will govern the award:

- 1 Papers on theoretical or applied statistics are eligible.
- 2 Single- and co-authored papers in which the principal author is a member of SASA will be considered.
- 3 The papers must have been published (either online or in hard copy) in 2014.
- 4 Papers appearing in refereed journals, in fully refereed conference proceedings or as refereed chapters in books are eligible (books, theses or dissertations are not).
- 5 Nominations for the award may be made by a member of SASA (who is not an author) or submissions may be made by the author(s). An individual may only submit one paper for the award.
- 6 Nominations and submissions must (preferably) be e-mailed, in PDF format, to:

Paul Fatti (Chairman of the Judges Panel) at paulfatti@gmail.com

Otherwise they can be sent by post to him at:

The School of Statistics & Actuarial Science
University of the Witwatersrand
P.O. WITS
2050

to reach him by 31 August, 2015.

7 In evaluating the papers for the medal, the panel will use the following set of criteria:

- The impact of the paper in its specific field
- How innovative are the ideas or techniques used in the paper
- The relevance of the problem being addressed
- How well-written is the paper

8 The decision by SASA on the award of the medal will be final. The membership of the panel is still to be finalised. Any member of the panel who is himself a nominee will be replaced by someone not nominated for the medal.

The winner(s) of the Herbert Sichel Medal will be announced at the 2015 Annual Conference of the Association, which will be hosted by the University of Pretoria during November.

The Statistician-General has the pleasure in inviting you to the

Annual Isibalo Symposium

Stellenbosch University
29 June 2015

at Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies (STIAS)

Speakers include:

Mr Jeff Radebe,
Minister in the Presidency

Professor Wim de Villiers
Rector and Vice Chancellor
Stellenbosch University

Mr Pali Lehohla
Statistician-General

Professor Sabina Alkire
Director of the Oxford Poverty
and Human Development
Institute (OPHI)

Professor Manie Geyer
Director of the Centre for Regional
and Urban Statistical
Exploration (CRUISE)

Discussions will include the
Global multidimensional Poverty Index
New data for the effective implementation
of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)



The symposium will highlight the work of CRUISE, which was founded in 2009 as a collaborative effort between Stats SA and the department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Stellenbosch University.



The South Africa I know, the home I understand

Feedback from SASA 2nd Year Scholarship Recipient

This year Michelle Alexander (University of Pretoria) received the 2nd year scholarship for outstanding academic achievement in statistics at an undergraduate level. The recipient provided some comments on her experience and choice of statistics at a university level.

When I began my journey at university, I had no idea what I wanted to study. I knew I wanted to be a part of the business world, but that is as much as I knew. I was registered for a general business degree, but the day before university started I knew I needed to pick something more specific, so I thought why not statistics?

I had always wanted to pursue an uncommon degree and I have always loved math, so this seemed like the perfect choice. I understood statistics, and it came naturally to me. I soon realized that I was

one of few who grasped the concepts easily, so I thought it would be a suitable study and career choice, especially since there are very few other people studying my degree as well. As my first and second year at university passed, I began to enjoy statistics more and more and realized I had chosen the right career path. Now that I am in my third year I have begun looking at potential career paths and I am amazed at how broad the statistics field is. I am hoping to study further, either to become a chartered financial analyst, or to do my doctorate and become a lecturer. I am also very interested in forensic statistics as a potential career one day. However, I never seem to stop learning about statistics and how it is immersed in everyday life. I am very excited to see where my future career as a statistician takes me!



Miss Michelle Alexander, recipient of the SASA 2nd Year Scholarship

Third Year Competition sponsored by SAS, ICCSSA and SASA

The competition for both the scholarship and the bursaries was tough but the Education committee identified the three most worthy recipients: Ms Emma Plumstead of NMMU won the scholarship (sponsored by SAS) with exceptional third year results while Ms Shannon Sass (NMMU) and Mr Sabelo Mokoena (UKZN) received the bursaries (sponsored by ICCSSA and SASA respectively). Emma's photograph was published in the March Newsletter.



SASA and ICCSSA 3rd year bursary recipient Sabelo Mokoena (UKZN) with Prof Michael Murray (left) and Prof Delia North (right)



SASA and ICCSSA 3rd year bursary recipient Shannon Sass (NMMU)
with Prof Gary Sharp (left) and Dr Johan Hugo (right)

SEMINAR PROGRAM: SECOND SEMESTER 2015

Stellenbosch University Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science

31 July	Nelmarie Louw (Department of Statistics and Actuarial science, SU) <i>Dimension reduction in Multi-label problems where there are more variables than data cases</i>
14 August	Lidia Auret (Department of Process Engineering, SU) <i>Unsupervised machine learning methods for process monitoring</i>
28 August	Marieta van der Rijst (Agricultural Research Council, Stellenbosch) <i>Characterisation of product profile by considering the relation between different sets of variables in multi-block data - an application to SA Rooibos and Honeybush tea</i>
18 September	Bruce Watson (Department of Information Science, SU) <i>Lattice techniques in pattern matching algorithms</i>
2 October	Marena Manley (Department of Food Science, SU) <i>Non-destructive characterisation of cereal grains with near infrared (NIR) hyperspectral imaging and principal component analysis (PCA)</i>
16 October	Stephan van der Westhuizen (Compuscan, Stellenbosch) <i>Statistics at the Credit Bureau - a data analyst's view point</i>
17 November	Gregory Levitin (The Israel Electric Corporation, Haifa, Israel) <i>Merging game theory and risk analysis in optimal defense of complex stochastic systems</i>

Lectures start at 13:00 and are held in the Statistics and Accounting Building, cnr Victoria and Bosman Streets, Stellenbosch. Enquires: Danie Uys, Telephone: 021 808 3879 , Fax: 021 808 3830, e-mail: dwu@sun.ac.za

Divan Aristo Burger, PhD

Divan Burger was born in Bloemfontein in 1985, grew up in Pretoria, returned to Bloemfontein and matriculated at Fichardt Park High School in 2003. He obtained BCom (Actuarial Science), BCom (Hons) (Mathematical Statistics) and MCom (Mathematical Statistics) degrees at the University of the Free State (UFS) in 2006, 2007 and 2009, all with distinction; at Honours and Masters level he received the UFS Senate Medal for the best student at the university. He completed his PhD studies (2013 to 2014) under the supervision of Profs Robert Schall and Abrie van der Merwe at the UFS. In his PhD research, he proposed new statistical models for the time course of the early bactericidal activity of tuberculosis drugs. His PhD research has been published in three papers in statistical

and medical journals. Since 2007 he has been working at Quintiles Biostatistics in Bloemfontein where he specialized in the planning, statistical analysis and reporting of clinical trials and clinical trial data. He has recently been awarded an NRF post-doctoral bursary in the framework of the NRF-SASA *Crisis in Academic Statistics* initiative. Divan will pursue his post-doctoral research in the Department of Mathematical Statistics and Actuarial Science, UFS, but will continue to serve as a part-time consultant to Quintiles Biostatistics.



Divan Aristo Burger

Trudie Sandrock



Trudie Sandrock

My name is Trudie, I am currently doing postdoctoral research in Statistics at the University of Stellenbosch and I have a confession to make: I never intended to become a statistician...

I left school not really knowing what statistics was, with my mind set on becoming an actuary.

After a BCom (Maths and Stats) at NMMU, I started work as an actuarial assistant but was sufficiently intrigued by statistics to take the “scenic route” to becoming an actuary. I therefore enrolled for an Honours degree in Statistics at Unisa before starting any actuarial exams. Soon I was hooked by Statistics and all thoughts of an actuarial career flew out the window.

For large parts, my career path did not involve much formal statistics. I worked in data analysis roles at Sanlam, Investec and at a financial services company in the United Kingdom. This meant that I got to dabble in many diverse fields such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and market research, for example client satisfaction surveys and developing investor confidence indices. In terms of more formal statistical applications,

The best thing about being a statistician is that you get to play in everyone else’s backyard.”
- John Tukey

I looked at data mining problems such as the prediction of life policy lapses and helping to target direct marketing campaigns and improve response rates. For a number of years I was also a full-time stay-at-home mom, and for days on end my statistical undertakings were confined to estimating the probability that all three of my children would sleep through on any given night (spoiler alert: this probability was – and still is – miniscule).

My current field of research is multi-label classification, and I was led in this direction by my desire to combine my love of music with my love of statistics. For my PhD dissertation, I specifically looked at the problem of polyphonic musical instrument recognition. Being able to combine two such diverse passions is what I love most about statistics, and John Tukey summed it up perfectly when he said: “The best thing about being a statistician is that you get to play in everyone else’s backyard.”

My advice to students considering a corporate career in statistics is:

Don’t expect to be doing fancy statistical calculations all the time. If you pursue a career in data science, you might end up doing formal statistics about 20% of the

continue on next page....

Young Statisticians continue.....

time, while the rest of the time you might function as a glorified data “panel beater”, trying to beat your data into submission. Embrace that, rather than becoming frustrated; you learn a lot through the process.

Along the same vein, work with actual “dirty” datasets every chance you get. In the real world, datasets are seldom as clean as the benchmark datasets you typically work with at university, and you also won’t get pointers regarding which statistical technique to use when. Find datasets on the internet (Kaggle is a great source) and play with the data – you will gain invaluable experience.

Hone your presentation skills – both written and oral. Practice this as much as you can; what will set you apart from other people with the same qualification as you, is an understanding of business and crucially, the ability to break down complex information and figures in a meaningful way and to present it in such a way that people with little or no background in statistics can understand it and act on it.

Invitation to form Special Interest groups

We would like to invite SASA members who share an interest in a specific statistical methodology or a specific application area to form Special Interest groups. These groups will operate like the SASA chapters and will be affiliated with SASA. However since they will not be based on geographical regions, communication during the year will most likely be through a shared webpage on the SASA website or other online communication tools.

A special interest group may attract sponsorship, may arrange face to face workshops, will most probably have satellite meetings at the time of the SASA conference, will chair a session at the SASA conference, may obtain accreditation with international societies. The main purpose is to facilitate communication among statisticians in the country who share an interest in the same methodology or application area so that they can exchange ideas and learn from one another.

An example of such a group is the Multivariate Data Analysis group

(MDAG). The aim of this group is to further discussion amongst SASA members with an interest in Multivariate Data Analysis. They have recently also obtained affiliation with the International Federation of Classification Societies. Have a look at their webpage, <http://www.sastat.org.za/mdag-0>.

If you wish to form such a group, submit a proposal (by sending an email to the secretary, Inger.Fabris-Rotelli@up.ac.za) to the SASA executive committee who will consider it for approval. The proposal should state the focus area, a motivation for forming such a group, the broad objectives of the group, including proposed activities. Each group should nominate a chairperson that will serve for a one year period but can stand for re-election. Once the group has been approved, SASA members will be informed via the SASA website so that they can join the group if they are interested. A webpage or a link to the group’s own webpage will be created.

Multivariate Data Analysis Group (MDAG) report

The Multivariate Data Analysis Group (MDAG), a special interest subgroup of SASA, is now affiliated with the International Federation of Classification Societies (IFCS). In response to the ballot for the admission to the IFCS, MDAG has unanimously been admitted to the society. The IFCS comprises the affiliation of 17 associations and the protocol of

collaboration with the International Association for Statistical Computing (IASC) and the International Statistical Institute (ISI).

The biennial IFCS conference will be held in Bologna, Italy, 6-8 July 2015.

<http://www.sastat.org.za/sites/default/files/files/MDAG%20constitution%20final%20201411.pdf>



Nominasies vir die 2016 SASV Uitvoerende Komitee Nominations for the 2016 SASA Executive Committee

- Nominasies vir die ampte van Vise-president en Nuusbrief Redakteur word verlang. *Nominations are called for the positions of Vice-president and Newsletter Editor.*
- Voltooiende vorms moet die Sekretaris voor 31 Augustus 2015 bereik. / *Completed forms must reach the Secretary before 31 August 2015.*
- Elke nominasie moet deur twee stemgeregtigde lede onderteken word en die genomineerde moet 'n stemgeregtigde lid van die Vereniging wees. / *Each nomination must be signed by two enfranchised members and the nominee must be an enfranchised member of the Association.*

ADRES

Die Sekretaris: SASV
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ADDRESS

The Secretary: SASA
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Ons, die ondergetekendes, nomineer / We, the undersigned, nominate

Genomineerde se naam / Nominee's name	vir die ampte van / for the position of
	(*) Vise-president / Vice-president
	Newsletter editor / Nuusbriefredakteur

vir die UK van die SA Statistiese Vereniging vir 2016 / on the EC of the SA Statistical Association for 2016.

Naam / Name	Handtekening / Signature	Datum / Date
1.....
2.....

Genomineerde se handtekening / Nominee's signature.

(*) 'n Nominasie vir Vise-president moet 'n kort CV vergesel / A nomination for Vice-president must be accompanied by a short CV



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