PARAMETER

Newsletter of the Chicago Chapter of the American Statistical Association

Volume 55 Number 3 **March 2010**

Editor's Note: Jump out of your winter hibernation and celebrate Spring with the CCASA!

No, you don't need to check your color settings on your computer - that's the Chicago River going green for St. Patrick's Day!

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March Luncheon

CCASA Tuesday Luncheon Program

Luncheon Announcement
Noon to 1:30PM
TUESDAY, March 23, 2009
The East Bank Club,
500 N. Kingsbury, Chicago 60610

Please join us for another exciting talk in the CCASA's 2009-2010 Luncheon program!

Our March speaker is **Juned Siddique**, DrPH, Assistant Professor at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, who will be speaking about ***Analytical Issues with Missing Data in Longitudinal Trials***.

Abstract: Longitudinal designs have many benefits, including the ability to measure the course of a disease over time. However, measuring participants repeatedly over time also leads to repeated opportunities for missing data, either through failure to answer certain items, missed assessments, or permanent withdrawal from the study. To avoid bias and loss of information, one should take missing values into account in the analysis. Several popular ways that are now being used to handle missing data, such as the last observation carried forward (LOCF), often lead to incorrect analyses. We discuss a number of these popular but unprincipled methods and describe modern approaches to classifying and analyzing data with missing values. We illustrate these approaches using data from the WECare study, a longitudinal randomized treatment study of low income women with depression.

Plans for our future luncheons will be included in our upcoming announcements and in the Parameter.

Lunch is $30 for CCASA members, $35 for non-members. Non-members, join the chapter for a year for only $15 and get the discount plus all of the other benefits of membership! As usual, the LucileDerrick Fund will purchase a limited number of tickets for students who wish to attend. If you are a student and would like to take advantage of this offer, please register online below, and contact Gerald Funk, expressing your interest. **Please register for the luncheon by this Friday, March 19th, 2010**.

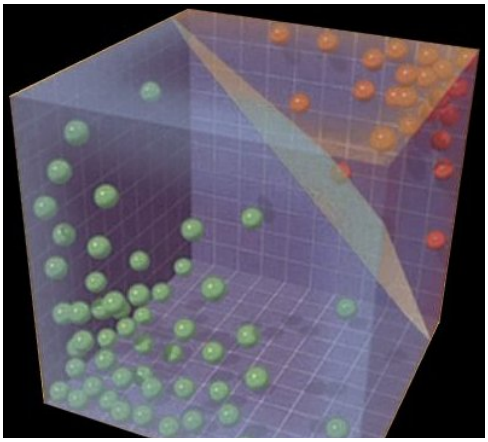
Register online now!

Mark Your Calendars! The **April luncheon** will be held on **April 27th**, and the speaker will be **Joseph Kang**. Joseph will present a talk on *Causality Models*. Plan to join your CCASA friends in April!

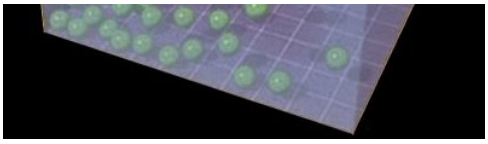
Questions: Contact Borko Jovanovic, CCASA VP Luncheons, Phone: 312-503-2008 or E-mail: borko@northwestern.edu

Spring Workshop: Support Vector Machines and Predictive Data Modeling Methodology

CCASA is proud to sponsor this exciting spring workshop on support vector machines (SVMs)!



When: Friday, March 26, 2010
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Where: Gleacher Center
450 North Cityfront Plaza Drive
Chicago, IL 60611-4316
312-464-8787



Featuring speaker Vladimir Cherkassky
Electrical and Computer Engineering
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

There is a growing interest in estimating predictive models from empirical data. The subject of data-driven modeling has been addressed in various disciplines such as statistics, pattern recognition, signal processing, genomics, artificial neural networks, machine learning, and data mining. Since late 1990s, many researchers and practitioners alike are actively applying the so-called Support Vector Machine (SVM) methods developed under the framework of Vapnik-Chervonenkis (VC) learning theory. ***This workshop pursues several methodological, practical and research goals, aimed to provide in-depth understanding of SVM methodology and the underlying VC-theoretical concepts..***

Register today at http://www.chicagoasa.org/Workshops/e032610. htm!

Spring Conference Recap

CCASA Spring Conference

We are pleased to report roughly 110 statisticians attended the 2010 CCASA Spring Conference and Career Fair! Thank you to the eight corporate sponsors **(Arc Worldwide, Burtch Works, Dotomi, Enova Financial LLC, Havi Global Solutions, Orbitz, Rapp Collins and The Nielsen Company)** and four career experts **(Linda Benton - Benton Search, Tameca Lyons - Chicago State University, Meghan Shea - Smith Hanley Associates and Sandy Marmitt - Burtch Works)** who helped make the career fair a success!

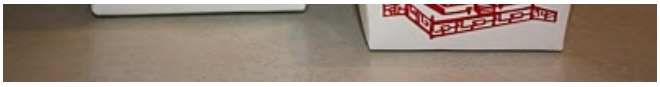
The afternoon conference speakers were a big hit and presented popular topics with a high correlation to our statistics world. A very special thanks to John VanderPloeg for organizing the conference and Byron Bell for putting together the career fair, along with yours truly.

Reminder: Fill Out Your Census!

The U.S. Census comes out once every 10 years (expect to see yours in the mail this week!) and the Census Bureau estimates that a 100% participation rate could reduce the cost of taking the census by $1.5 billion. To encourage response, the Bureau will publish mail participation daily at 2010.census.gov.

Check out this link to a Census Bureau press release promoting the cost savings linked to

increased mail-back response rate.



Digging deeper into the statistical roots of the U. S. Census is this piece detailing Don Rubin's work with the Census.

As a head's up, the 2010 Census asks for the following information:

1. The number of people living in the residence
2. Any additional people that might be living there as of April 1, 2010
3. Whether the residence is owned or rented
4. Telephone number (in case the Census Bureau has follow-up questions)
5. Name
6. Sex
7. Age and date of birth
8. Whether of Hispanic origin
9. Race
10. Whether that person sometimes lives somewhere else

To find out more about the 2010 U.S. Census, visit the website.

JSM Conference: Passport A Must!

If you're planning on attending the JSM (Joint Statistical Meetings) Conference in Vancouver in late July, make sure you have a passport! You will not be able to enter Canada without one. According to the JSM 2010 website, **March 31, 2010** is the suggested date to submit your passport application.

For more information, visit the 2010 Joint Statistical Meetings website.

Job Opportunities and Additional Info

Predictive Modeling Opportunities with Zurich North America

With 27 consecutive profitable quarters and strong financial ratings, Zurich North America continues to be a powerful force in the insurance industry. Using state-of-the-art modeling software and sophisticated methodologies, our modelers' main focus is to estimate how much it will cost us to write an insurance policy. Based on the customer's traits, we are figuring out how many losses we are likely to incur and what those losses will total in aggregate. That helps Zurich set an appropriate price for each policy we write. We also are starting other projects to gain additional insights. We have plans to help identify fraud in our claims, study customer retention to identify customers that are at risk of leaving Zurich, and identify good potential customers to target with our marketing campaigns.

The positions are for Actuaries or Statisticians with the following position summary and position ID numbers:

Actuarial Analyst I - Predictive Modeling (Job 21227)

Statistical Analyst II - Predictive Modeling (Job 21228)

Great entry-level position for Actuarial candidates or statisticians. Responsibilities would include working with large datasets including internal and external data, preliminary data analysis, and model building including advanced statistical techniques (GLMs, regression, clustering, trees, etc.). Position requires working in collaboration with other team members, data specialists, business units, and others. Required skills: strong statistical knowledge, strong quantitative/analytical skills, and proficiency in SAS. Advanced degree in statistics, actuarial science, math, or related field. At least two actuarial exams are required for the Actuarial position.

Interested candidates can do the following to apply online:
1) Please navigate to the following website address: www.zurichna.com
Hit the "Careers" link towards the top of the page; Hit the "Career Opportunities" link on the right side
2) Insert the appropriate Position ID number 21227 or 21228 in the search box toward the bottom of the page

It is the policy of Zurich in North America, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, to attract and retain the best-qualified people available, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or veteran status.

(Want to see your job opportunity in the PARAMETER? PARAMETER provides a job listing service by publishing Positions Available and Positions Wanted, the latter being free to Chapter members. Companies may list positions for $75. Contact the Editor for more information.)

****PLEASE NOTE EDITOR'S NEW CONTACT INFORMATION** Editor: Linda Burtch (847) 440-8560**

PARAMETER, newsletter of the Chicago Chapter of the American Statistical Association, is published 10 times a year as a service to its members. To submit material for publication, contact the Editor, Linda Burtch, email: lburtch@burtchworks.com

For additional information about Chicago Chapter ASA, please visit us on the web at: www.ChicagoASA.org.

Also, visit the National ASA web site www.amstat.org.

Email change of address to: smileyr@georgetown.edu

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web: http://www.chicagoasa.org

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