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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Statistics

ISSUE 9



StatLinks

THE OFFICIAL NEWS FROM THE TEXAS A&M DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS
TO LINK FRIENDS AND FORMER STUDENTS

**EDITOR**

ANA FERREIRA

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR II

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

As we conclude the Fall 2025 semester, I want to share my heartfelt appreciation for the dedication, collaboration, and spirit that define our department. This term has been filled with meaningful accomplishments across research, teaching, and student engagement. Our faculty continued to lead with innovation and impact, and our students demonstrated remarkable curiosity, resilience, and achievement in all they undertook.

We also celebrated several important events this semester, including the 2025 Zorich's Applied Statistics Workshop in September, the EnviBayes Workshop on Complex Environmental Data in October, and the 8th Annual Symposium on Cancer Research: Basic Science to Bioinformatics in November. These gatherings not only showcased the breadth of our scholarship but also reminded us of the strength of community and collaboration within and beyond our department.

What resonates most with me, however, is the everyday commitment each of you makes—mentoring students, supporting colleagues, contributing to departmental initiatives, and fostering an environment where people feel welcome and encouraged to grow. This spirit of generosity and shared purpose is truly what makes our department exceptional.

As this semester draws to a close, so does my time serving as Department Head. It has been an honor and a privilege to work alongside all of you. I am deeply grateful for your trust, your partnership, and the many ways you have enriched my experience in this role.

I am also delighted to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to Bani Mallick, who will be taking over as Department Head. I know the department will thrive under his leadership, vision, and commitment.

I wish each of you a joyful holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year. May the coming year bring continued success, discovery, and moments of connection for our entire community.

Warm Regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brani Vidakovic". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

BRANI VIDAKOVIC

H.O. Hartley Chair and Department Head

FACULTY AWARDS AND



Dr. Huiyan Sang has been awarded a three-year grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) as Principal Investigator for her project titled “Explainable Spatial Machine Learning Methods for Complex Socioeconomic Data.” This grant recognizes her innovative research in developing interpretable machine learning methods to analyze large-scale spatial and socioeconomic data.

Dr. Bani Mallick has been awarded a grant from the National Institutes of Health for his project titled “Bayesian Modeling of Single-Cell Spatial Transcriptomics Data to Identify Significant Spatial Patterns and Genes During CRD-Induced Mammary Gland Development.” This award supports Dr. Mallick’s continued work in developing advanced statistical methods for the analysis of complex biological data.



Dr. Samiran Sinha has been awarded an NIH R21 grant for his project “Development of Statistical and Computational Tools to Analyze Rhythmic Gene Expressions for a Deeper Understanding of Circadian Rhythms.” He is also serving as Co-PI on the Greater Texas Community Panel project (PI: Beth Racine, Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center), funded by the Texas A&M AgriLife Institute via USDA-ARS (06/01/25–05/31/26).

RECOGNITIONS



Dr. Brani Vidakovic has been awarded two new grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The first, NSF DMS-2537417: “Best of Statistical Science (BOSS) 2026 Workshop at Texas A&M University,” provides \$20,000 in funding to support junior researchers attending the upcoming BOSS Workshop, which aims to foster collaboration and showcase cutting-edge developments in statistical science. The second grant, NSF DMS-2515246/2515247: “Collaborative Research: Novel Bayesian Thresholding and Shrinkage Methods in Multiscale Domains with Applications,” is a collaborative research project with Dr. Anirban DasGupta from Purdue University, supported by a \$200,000 NSF award.

Dr. Valen Johnson has been awarded a \$750,000, five-year grant from the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE-NNSA) as part of the Tech Consortium, a collaborative effort led by Dr. Jason Hayward at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. As the Texas A&M University principal investigator, Dr. Johnson will contribute to the consortium’s goal of facilitating collaborations between academics and national laboratories, with a particular emphasis on involving graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in these joint research efforts. In addition, Dr. Johnson has received a \$202,000 research contract with Lockheed Martin for the project “Real-Time Monitoring and Anomaly Detection,” which will run from September 10, 2025, through June 30, 2026.



FACULTY RECOGNIZED AT COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES PROMOTION CELEBRATION

Drs. Rajarshi Guhaniyogi, Raymond Wong, Darren Homrighausen, and Scott Bruce attended a celebratory dinner hosted by the College of Arts and Sciences in recognition of faculty members who recently received promotions. The event highlighted the remarkable accomplishments and dedication of promoted faculty across the college, offering an opportunity to honor their scholarly achievements and service to the university community. Accompanying them was Dr. Brani Vidakovic, Department Head, who joined in celebrating their professional milestones, reaffirming the department's commitment to supporting faculty excellence and advancement.



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES WELCOMES NEW FACULTY AT ORIENTATION DINNER

The College of Arts and Sciences hosted its annual New Faculty Orientation Dinner on August 12, 2025, at the Hall of Champions at Kyle Field, welcoming new faculty members to the Texas A&M community. Representing the Department of Statistics were Drs. Jade Wang, Ciara Nugent, Debangon Dey, Saheed Akinbode, Hadi Salman, and Austin Brown, who joined fellow new faculty from across the college in an evening of introductions and networking. Dr. Brani Vidakovic, Department Head, attended the event alongside them, offering his support and congratulations as the department celebrated its newest members and their upcoming contributions to research, teaching, and service at Texas A&M University.



From left to right: Jade Wang, Ciara Nugent, Debangon Dey, Brani Vidakovic, Saheed Akinbode, Hadi Salman, and Austin Brown



CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF DR. MOHSEN POURAHMADI

This semester, the Department of Statistics celebrates the retirement of Dr. Mohsen Pourahmadi, marking the conclusion of a distinguished academic career. Dr. Pourahmadi earned his Ph.D. in Statistics from Michigan State University in 1980 and joined our department in 2008 as a Professor, bringing decades of expertise in statistical methodology. During his time here, he made significant contributions to research, teaching, and mentoring, guiding numerous students and colleagues. Beyond his scholarship, he has been a valued member of our community, fostering collaboration and growth. In recognition of his dedication and impact, Dr. Pourahmadi now holds the title of Professor Emeritus. We extend our deepest gratitude for his 17 years of service and wish him continued fulfillment and joy in this next chapter of his life.

DISTINGUISHED AND REGENTS PROFESSORS RECEPTION

On Tuesday, October 28, the College of Arts and Sciences hosted a celebratory reception at the University Club to honor the 2024–2025 University Distinguished and Regents Professors. This annual event recognizes faculty whose scholarly achievements, teaching excellence, and leadership have made a profound impact on Texas A&M University and their respective fields.

Among the honorees in attendance was Dr. Bani Mallick, who celebrated his recent recognition as a Regents Professor, one of the highest academic distinctions awarded within The Texas A&M University System. Colleagues, administrators, and guests gathered to congratulate Dr. Mallick and the other distinguished faculty, acknowledging their exceptional contributions to research, mentorship, and service.



From left to right: Brani Vidakovic, Marlan Scully, Bani Mallick, and Simon North

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES HOSTS THE THIRD ANNUAL INVESTITURE CEREMONY

On November 13, the College of Arts and Sciences held its third annual Investiture Ceremony at the Memorial Student Center, gathering university leaders, faculty, benefactors, and guests to celebrate one of academia's most meaningful traditions—the formal recognition of endowed chairs, professorships, and faculty fellowships. These highly prestigious honors acknowledge exceptional scholars whose accomplishments in research, teaching, and service elevate Texas A&M University's academic mission and global reputation.

Endowed positions are foundational to the university's pursuit of excellence. They provide essential resources that empower faculty to advance impactful research, mentor students, and explore innovative directions in their fields. The ceremony also serves as a tribute to the partnership between the university and its generous donors, whose investments create long-term opportunities for academic leadership and discovery.

Rising Leadership in the Department of Statistics

This year's event highlighted the remarkable achievements of several faculty members from the Department of Statistics, reflecting the department's continued growth and influence on both national and international scales.

Among the newly appointed endowed faculty fellows, Dr. Anirban Bhattacharya was recognized as the new Patricia R. Smith & Dr. William B. Smith Faculty Fellow

for Statistics, honoring his outstanding contributions to Bayesian modeling and interdisciplinary research. Dr. Huiyan Sang received the Dr. Raymond J. Carroll and Dr. Marcia G. Ory Endowed Faculty Fellowships in Statistics in recognition of her pioneering work in spatial statistics and environmental applications. Dr. Xianyang Zhang was named the Regina and Norman Carroll Faculty Fellow in Statistics, highlighting his innovative contributions to modern statistical inference and high-dimensional data analysis. Together, these appointments reflect the department's vibrant research culture and emerging leadership.

Distinguished Continuity and Reappointments

The ceremony also honored senior faculty reappointed to distinguished chair positions. Dr. Bani Mallick, an internationally recognized leader in Bayesian analysis and computational statistics, continues as the Susan M. Arseven '74 Chair in Data Science and Computational Statistics. Dr. Brani Vidakovic, a prominent scholar known for his influential work in wavelets, Bayesian methods, and interdisciplinary applications, remains the H.O. Hartley Chair in Statistics. Their continued appointments underscore a long-standing tradition of scholarly rigor and sustained academic leadership.

Sustained Leadership in Current Chair Roles

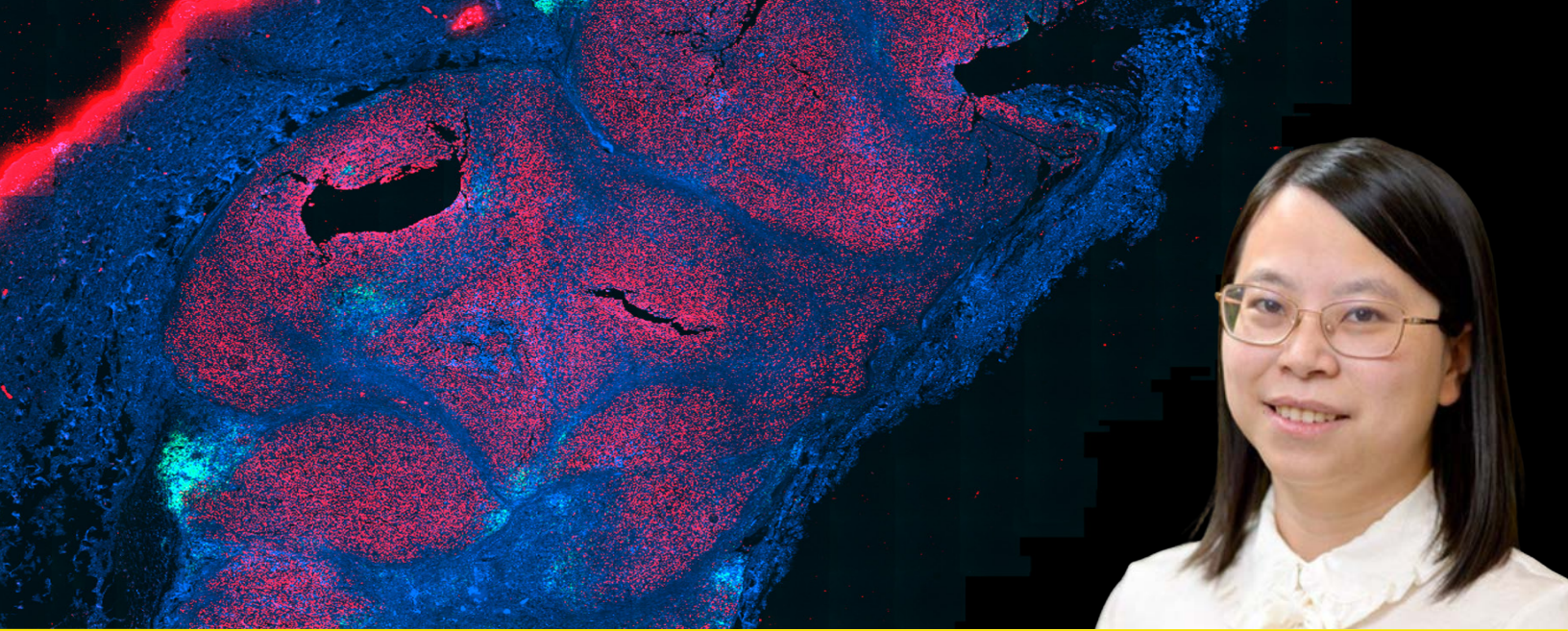
In addition to newly appointed and reappointed faculty, several distinguished statisticians currently

hold prestigious endowed chair positions. Dr. Raymond Carroll, widely regarded for his pioneering research in measurement error modeling and biomedical statistics, serves as the Jill and Stewart Harlin '83 Chair in Statistics. Dr. Valen Johnson, a transformative leader in Bayesian statistics and statistical methodology, continues in his role as the George P. Mitchell '40 Chair in Statistics. Their ongoing leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the department's research priorities and mentoring future generations of scholars.

This year's Investiture Ceremony not only celebrated individual accomplishments but also highlighted the profound impact endowed positions have on academic communities. The event offered a moment for reflection on the legacy of excellence within the Department of Statistics and across the College of Arts and Sciences. It also reinforced the university's long-term commitment to fostering an environment where groundbreaking research and academic innovation can flourish.

As Texas A&M continues to expand its research footprint and invest in scholarly leadership, events like the Investiture Ceremony serve as an enduring reminder of the vital role faculty play in shaping the university's future. For the Department of Statistics, the recognition of its faculty across multiple endowed roles marks both a celebration of past achievements and an exciting promise of continued growth, discovery, and impact.





INNOVATIVE TOOL TRANSFORMS LARGE-SCALE TISSUE DATA ANALYSIS

Assistant Professor Dr. Xiyu Peng from the Texas A&M Department of Statistics has co-led the development of *SpatialTopic*, a powerful computational tool designed to rapidly analyze large, high-dimensional tissue datasets and uncover the spatial organization of cells. These insights are essential for advancing our understanding of disease processes, including how cancers emerge, evolve, and respond to treatment. The team's findings, published in *Nature Communications*, highlight a scalable and interpretable framework capable of handling the growing volume of modern tissue-imaging data.

Recent advances in imaging technologies now allow researchers to measure thousands of cellular markers across millions of cells on a single tissue slide—an extraordinary opportunity that also introduces significant analytical challenges. *SpatialTopic* addresses this by automatically detecting biologically and clinically meaningful cell patterns, such as immune cell clusters that help the body fight cancer, without requiring pathologists to manually examine each slide. Importantly, the tool is compatible with both spatial transcriptomics and proteomics platforms, making it versatile across multiple research workflows. Its computational efficiency is also notable: *SpatialTopic* can analyze roughly 100,000 cells in under a minute on a standard laptop, significantly lowering the barrier to high-resolution spatial analysis.

Dr. Peng is currently collaborating with researchers at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center to apply *SpatialTopic* in the search for biomarkers that could guide cancer immunotherapy and improve patient outcomes. Supported by funding from the National Institutes of Health, the National Cancer Institute, and additional organizations, the tool's flexibility enables researchers to compare tissue characteristics across patients, disease stages, and experimental conditions. Ultimately, *SpatialTopic* represents a major step forward in harnessing large-scale spatial data to advance discovery and support progress in precision medicine.

CELEBRATING DR. VIDAKOVIC'S LEADERSHIP

As the Department of Statistics bids farewell to Dr. Brani Vidakovic in his role as Department Head, we extend our sincere appreciation for his five years of dedicated leadership and service. Since assuming the position in 2020, Dr. Vidakovic has led the department through a period marked by both challenges and progress, including the transition to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the university-wide academic reorganization and formation of the new College of Arts and Sciences, and a renewed focus on research, teaching, and outreach.

During his tenure, the department saw the recruitment of new faculty, the expansion of its degree offerings, and strengthened connections with the broader statistical community. Dr. Vidakovic has been a steady advocate for students, staff, and faculty, and his efforts to foster a supportive and collaborative environment have made a lasting impact.

While he is stepping down from his administrative role, we are grateful that Dr. Vidakovic will continue as a valued member of our faculty. We thank him for his leadership, dedication, and the many contributions he has made to the department's growth and success over the past five years.



NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS

The Department of Statistics at Texas A&M University is entering a new era of leadership with the appointment of Dr. Bani Mallick as the next Department Head, effective January 1, 2026. Dr. Mallick, a longtime member of the faculty, is widely recognized for his influential research, dedication to teaching, and commitment to advancing the discipline of statistics and data science.

Dr. Mallick is internationally recognized for his contributions to Bayesian statistics, machine learning, and his applications across a broad spectrum of scientific disciplines. He has authored numerous publications in leading journals, has collaborated extensively with researchers worldwide, and has served the profession through various leadership and editorial roles.

As Department Head, Dr. Mallick will provide strategic direction during a period of continued growth and opportunity for the department.

His vision emphasizes strengthening interdisciplinary collaborations, expanding innovative research initiatives, and supporting both undergraduate and graduate education.

The department welcomes Dr. Mallick's leadership and looks forward to the insight, perspective, and dedication he will bring to this important position. His appointment represents an important milestone in the department's ongoing mission to excel in research, teaching, and service.



MEET THE NEW DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

EFFECTIVE 1/1/2026



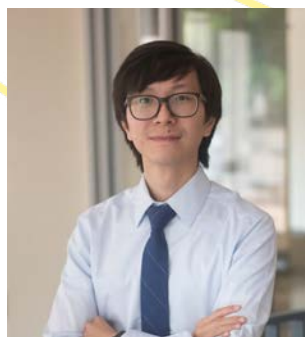
Bani Mallick
Department Head



Alan Dabney
**Associate Department
Head for Teaching
Excellence**



Rajarshi Guhaniyogi
**Associate Department
Head for Operations**



Raymond Wong
**Director of PhD
Program**



Derya Akleman
**Director of MS
Programs**



Huiyan Sang
**Director of
Undergraduate
Program**



Yuchao Jiang
**Director of
Bioinformatics
Program**

STAFF

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS



Carrie Relles was honored with the Ersen Arseven '74 Annual Staff Award in the Department of Statistics, recognizing her outstanding contributions and dedication to the department. In celebration of this achievement, Carrie received a plaque and a \$1,000 award, highlighting her exceptional service and commitment to excellence.

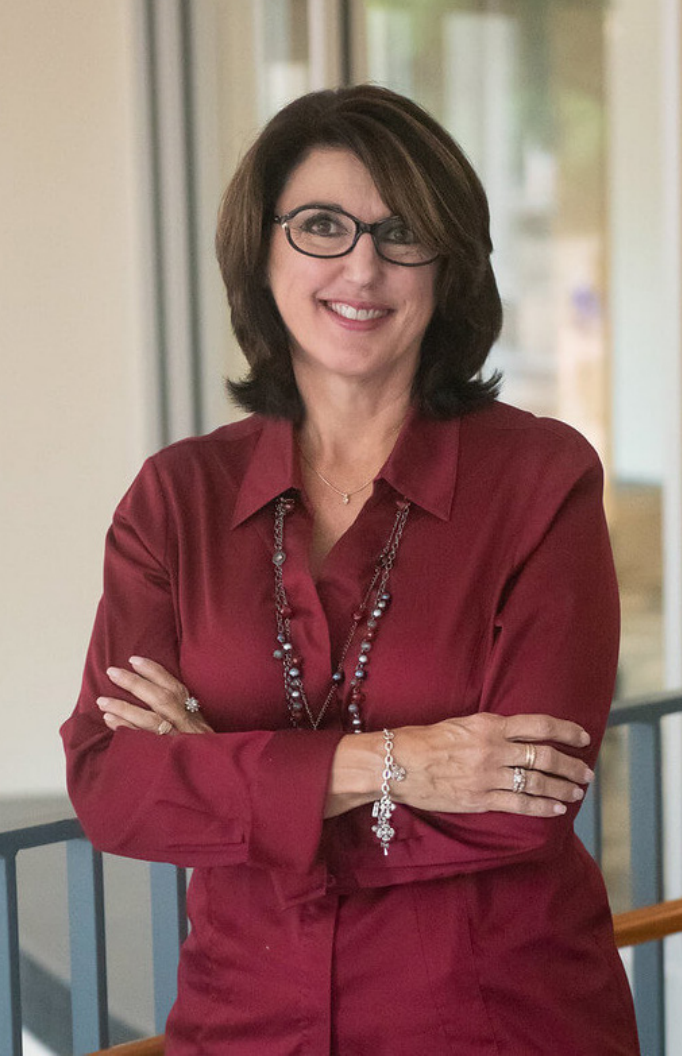


Ana Ferreira was honored with the 12th Man Award during the Aggie Reunion held in conjunction with the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) in Nashville, Tennessee. In recognition of this award, Ana was presented with a 12th Man jersey customized with her last name, celebrating her dedication and contributions to the Department of Statistics.



NEW STAFF

We are pleased to extend a delayed welcome to Edward "Ward" Wilbanks, who joined the Distance Statistics Program as Program Coordinator I in July. Ward brings valuable skills and experience to the team and will play a key role in supporting the program's operations and initiatives. We are excited to have him as part of the team and look forward to his contributions to the continued success of the program.



CELEBRATING PENNY JACKSON'S RETIREMENT

This December, the Department of Statistics bids farewell to Penny Jackson, who is retiring after 18 years of dedicated service as the Program Manager for the Distance Learning Statistics Program. Penny has been the backbone of the program, managing all administrative aspects from prospective students to graduation with unmatched dedication and professionalism. Beyond her administrative expertise, she has been a tireless ambassador for the program, traveling across the country to promote its opportunities and help grow its national reputation. Her commitment, energy, and care have left a lasting impact on students, faculty, and colleagues alike. We wish Penny the very best in this new chapter and thank her for her many years of outstanding service.



STAFF HOLIDAY BREAKFAST AND GIFT EXCHANGE CELEBRATION

On December 17th, the department's staff and Department Head, Dr. Brani Vidakovic, gathered for the annual Staff Holiday Breakfast and Gift Exchange to celebrate the holiday season together. The morning began with a festive breakfast, providing a relaxed and cheerful setting for colleagues to connect, share stories, and enjoy each other's company outside of the office. Afterward, the group participated in a lively gift exchange, adding an element of fun and camaraderie to the event. The celebration offered a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the year, strengthen connections among staff, and end the semester on a joyful and festive note.



GRADUATE STUDENTS AWARDS



Niladri Kal was awarded the Student Poster Award at the 2025 International Indian Statistical Association (IISA) Conference, held at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln from June 12–15. His poster, titled “Adaptive Divide and Conquer with Two Rounds of Communication,” was recognized for its innovation and contribution to statistical methodology.



Shuren He was named one of the two winners of the ASA ENVR Student Paper Award for his work titled “GS-BART: Bayesian Additive Regression Trees with Graph-split Decision Rules.” In recognition of this achievement, he was invited to present his research at the 2025 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM), highlighting his innovative contributions to Bayesian methodology and environmental statistics.

AND RECOGNITIONS



Arhit Chakrabarti has been awarded the Emanuel Parzen Graduate Research Fellowship Award, a prestigious honor established by the Department of Statistics to recognize graduate students who have demonstrated exemplary research, going above and beyond the expectations for graduation. This fellowship highlights Arhit's outstanding contributions to statistical methodology and underscores his dedication, creativity, and impact as a rising scholar in the field.



Brigham Halverson was honored with the William S. Connor Award during the Aggie Reunion at JSM. This prestigious award, presented by the faculty of the Department of Statistics, recognizes the most outstanding graduate student among those passing the preliminary examinations in the preceding year. This award celebrates Brigham's exceptional performance, dedication, and promise as a Ph.D. candidate.

PIONEERING PATHS: A CONVERSATION

WITH DR. LYLE BROEMELING, ONE OF TEXAS A&M'S FIRST PH.D. GRADUATES

When the Department of Statistics at Texas A&M University was newly established, few could have imagined the legacy it would build. Among the pioneers who helped shape its early success was Dr. Lyle Broemeling, one of the department's first Ph.D. graduates. In this conversation, Dr. Broemeling reflects on his time at Texas A&M, his mentors, and the growth of the field that has defined his career.

Early Foundations

"I earned a B.S. in 1960 and an M.S. in 1963 in mathematics from Texas A&M," Dr. Broemeling recalls. "The Statistics Department had just been established, and I especially enjoyed a course in probability theory—it gave me an excellent background for future study."

When the department began accepting Ph.D. students, Broemeling knew it was the right place to continue his education. "The first head of the department was R.J. Freund," he explains. "In 1963, Dr. H.O. Hartley joined from Iowa State University, bringing Dr. J.N.K. Rao with him. I chose Dr. Hartley as my advisor because of his expertise in several branches of statistics."

A Department Taking Shape

"It was a new department with young, energetic faculty who had just completed their Ph.D.s," he says. "Professors Gene Dayhoff, J.N.K. Rao, and Ron Hocking were among the early members. I remember traveling with Dr. Hocking to Los Angeles in 1966 to present my dissertation at the ASA annual

meeting—it was an unforgettable experience." His dissertation, "Exact Confidence Regions for the Variance Components of a Random Model," was completed under Dr. Hartley's guidance. "He was kind and patient, and we later co-authored a journal article based on my dissertation," Broemeling adds.

Career and Accomplishments

After earning his Ph.D. in 1966, Dr. Broemeling joined Oklahoma State University, where he taught graduate-level statistics and supervised 17 Ph.D. students. His research was supported by a grant from the Office of Naval Research, which also funded several of his students.

Over the years, his contributions earned him numerous honors, including the H.O. Hartley Award (1985), election as a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society (1974), and membership in the International Statistical Institute (1972).

Reflections and Advice

"The field has changed tremendously," he reflects. "When I graduated in 1966, there was no internet. Now it's indispensable for collaboration and data sharing. Back then, we used SAS and machine language—today, R dominates data analysis."

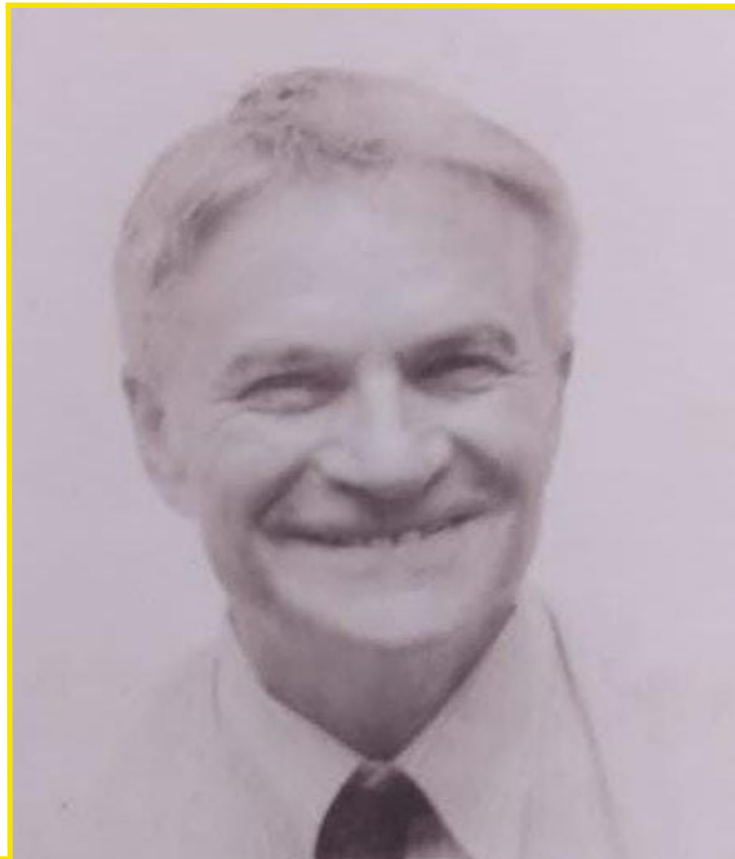
Looking back, Dr. Broemeling credits Texas A&M with laying the groundwork for a fulfilling career. "It gave me the technical background to succeed in both academia and government service," he says. His advice to students today is simple: "Study hard, and you will be rewarded."

ION WITH DR. LYLE BROEMELING

GRADUATES IN STATISTICS

From one of the department's earliest scholars to a lifelong mentor, researcher, and contributor to the field, Dr. Lyle Broemeling's journey exemplifies the pioneering spirit that continues to define Texas A&M Statistics. His career reflects the department's enduring commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and collaboration across disciplines. Through decades of teaching, research, and mentorship, Dr. Broemeling has helped shape future generations of statisticians while carrying forward the tradition of curiosity and rigor that began in the department's formative years.

His story stands as a reminder of how the vision and dedication of the department's earliest graduates continue to influence the success and reputation of Texas A&M Statistics today.

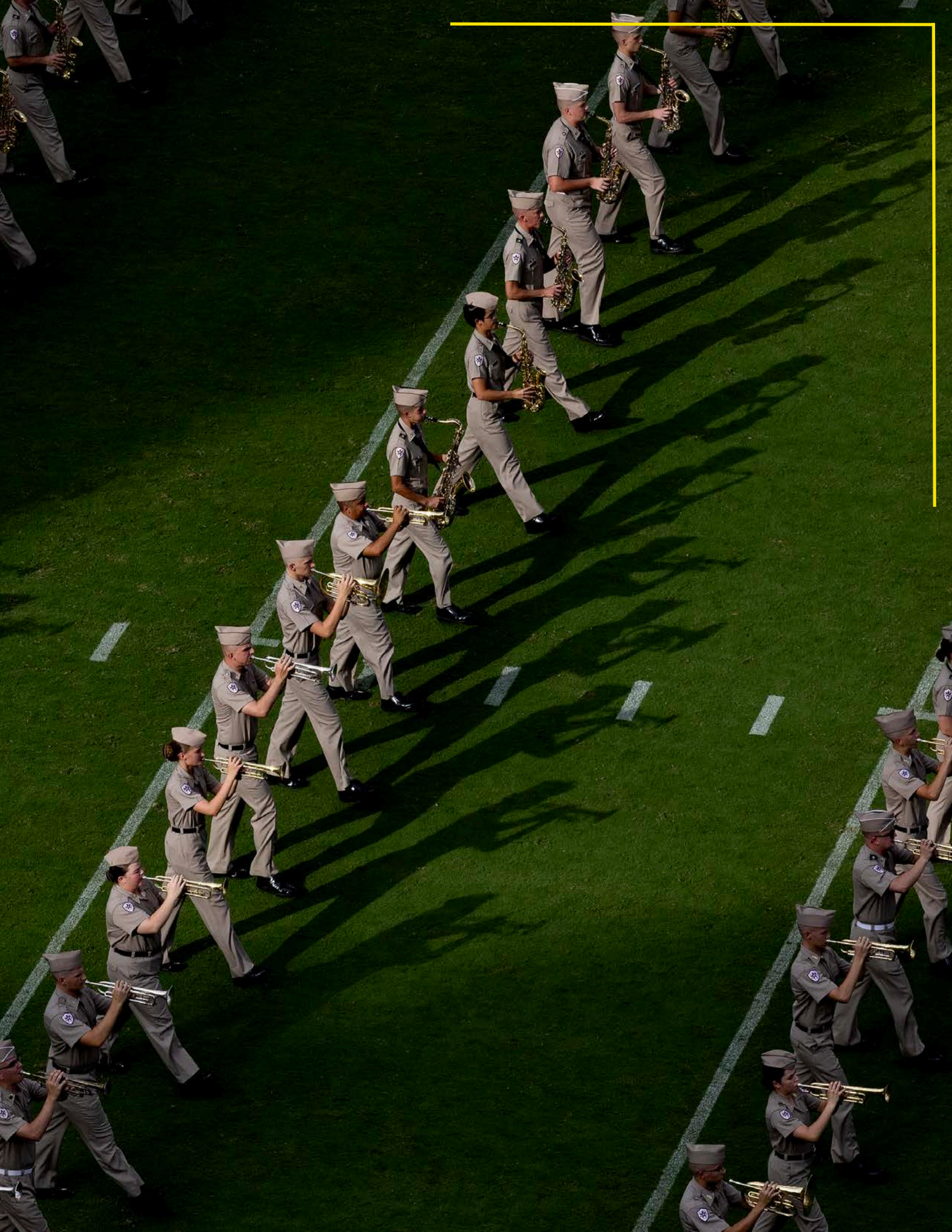


FALL
2025

EVENTS

AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER
NOVEMBER | DECEMBER





FALL 2025



LIONEL TRUQUET

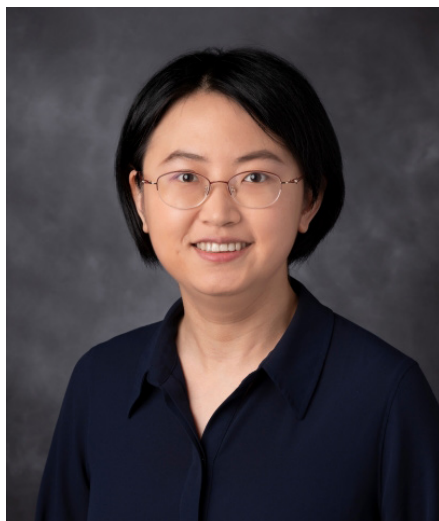
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF STATISTICS - HEAD OF RESEARCH,
DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICAL SCIENCES, ENSAI**

“Nearest Neighbor Matching: From Average Treatment Effects to Transfer Learning”

JAMSHID NAMDARI

**POST DOCTORAL, DEPARTMENT OF BIOSTATISTICS AND
BIOINFORMATICS, EMORY UNIVERSITY**

“Localized Sparse Principal Component Analysis of
Multivariate Time Series in Frequency Domain”



LULU SHANG

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF BIOSTATISTICS, MD
ANDERSON CANCER CENTER**

“Statistical Methods for Detecting Spatially Regulated Genes
in Spatial Transcriptomics”

COLLOQUIUMS



LU WANG

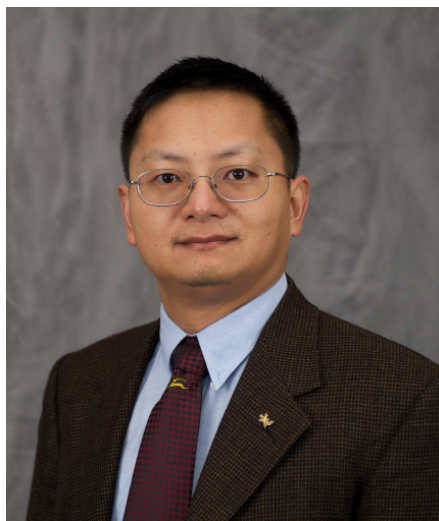
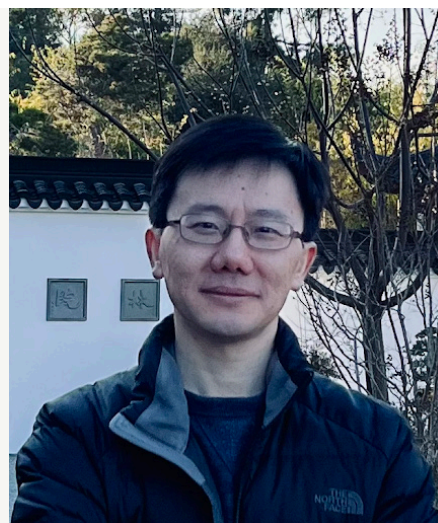
**PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF BIOSTATISTICS,
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

“Leveraging Causal Inference and Reinforcement Learning to Optimize Personalized Dynamic Treatment Regimes”

QING ZHOU

**PROFESSOR AND CHAIR OF STATISTICS AND DATA SCIENCE
FACULTY, DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS & DATA SCIENCE,
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES**

“Causal Discovery on Dependent Data”



XIAOMING HUO

**A. RUSSELL CHANDLER III PROFESSOR, STEWART SCHOOL OF
INDUSTRIAL & SYSTEMS ENGINEERING,
GEORGIA TECH**

“Asymptotic Behavior of Adversarial Training Estimator Under ℓ^∞ -Perturbation”

SGSA EVENTS



On September 10th, Dr. Toryn Schafer hosted a Workflow Workshop focused on the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program (NSF GRFP). The session provided valuable guidance for students preparing competitive applications, offering insights into the fellowship's structure, expectations, and best practices. Dr. Schafer's workshop served as an excellent resource for participants looking to strengthen their materials and better navigate the application process.

On October 2nd, the SGSA hosted a "Meet the Professors" coffee chat, creating a welcoming space for graduate students to connect with newly arrived faculty members. The event offered an informal and engaging setting for students to learn about faculty research interests, ask questions, and begin building meaningful academic relationships.



On October 20th, the department hosted an Internship Workshop featuring a panel of our own graduate students who shared insights from their diverse professional experiences. Panelists included Valeriya, who interned at Google; Carrie, who worked at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; Leo, who gained industry experience with the Oklahoma City Thunder; and Joyce, who interned at J.P. Morgan.

STAT CAFE



BANI MALLICK

"Bayesian Local Models
Using Partitions"



JADE WANG

"Statistical Methods
for Spatial and Imaging
Data"

DEBANGAN DEY

"Innovations in Multivariate
Stochastic Processes:
Bridging Environment and
Digital Health"



SAMIRAN SINHA

"Statistical Methods
for Analyzing Circadian
Rhythm"



PRITAM DEY

"TAVIE: A General Tangent
Approximation Framework
for Strongly Super-Gaussian
Likelihoods"



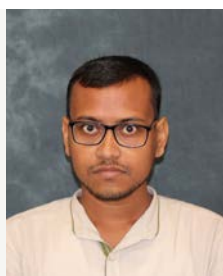
SOMJIT ROY

"Bayesian Symbolic Trees
for Structural Learning of
Scientific Expressions"



SOHAM GHOSH

"Posterior Contraction
Rates for Subspace
Estimation through Dense
Factor Models"



AUSTIN BROWN

"Some Applications of
Optimal Transport to
Markov Chain
Monte Carlo"



TRISHA DAWN

"Covariate-assisted
Graph Matching"



2025 JOINT STATI



2025 AGGIE REUNION

The Department of Statistics at Texas A&M University hosted its annual Aggie Reunion during the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) 2025 in Nashville, Tennessee, bringing together faculty, students, former students, and friends of the department to celebrate another successful year. The event served as a wonderful opportunity for members of the Aggie Statistics community to reconnect, reflect on the department's many accomplishments, and honor the achievements of outstanding individuals who continue to make an impact both within Texas A&M and the broader statistical community.

The evening's program highlighted important milestones and memorable moments from the past academic year, showcasing the department's continued growth in research innovation, teaching excellence, and professional engagement. As part of the celebration, several departmental awards were presented, such as the 12th Man Award, the William S. Connor Award, the Emanuel Parzen Graduate Research Fellowship Award, and the Ersen Arseven '74 Annual Staff Award in the Department of Statistics.

The Aggie Reunion continues to be a cherished tradition for the department, fostering connection and pride among current and former members. It serves as a reminder of the department's strong sense of community and shared commitment to advancing the field of statistics, mentoring future generations, and upholding the Aggie spirit of excellence.

STATISTICAL MEETINGS



SUSA STUDENTS ATTEND JSM 2025 IN NASHVILLE

Four undergraduate students from the Statistics Undergraduate Student Association (SUSA) — Camila Cobos, Vainavi Chilukuri, Morena Flores, and Theodosia Dyadechko — had the opportunity to attend the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) 2025 in Nashville, Tennessee. Their participation was made possible through a \$2,500 Good Bull Fund scholarship, which supports student-led initiatives at Texas A&M University. The funding covered travel, lodging, registration, and an excursion in Nashville. The students actively engaged in professional development activities, networked with statisticians and industry professionals, and gained valuable insights into future career paths. The trip, organized by SUSA leadership, was a meaningful experience that strengthened their connection to the broader statistics community.



ANNUAL STAFF DINNER AT JSM

Continuing a cherished tradition, department staff members Elaine James, Judith Moreno, and Ana Ferreira joined Department Head Dr. Brani Vidakovic for their annual dinner during the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) 2025 trip. Held the evening before the Aggie Reunion, this year's gathering took place in Nashville, Tennessee, and brought together the group and their significant others for an evening of great food and meaningful conversation. The dinner served as a warm and memorable kickoff to the department's JSM events.

2025 ZORICH'S APPLIED STATISTICS WORKSHOP



The Department of Statistics, in partnership with the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, hosted the second annual Zorich's Applied Statistics Workshop on September 26, 2025. This workshop continues to grow as a meaningful venue for faculty, students, and industry partners to explore the practical applications of statistical methods in engineering and applied research.



The workshop featured a full day of presentations and discussions showcasing how statistical tools inform decision-making, optimize engineering processes, and address real-world analytical challenges. Faculty and students from both departments took part in the event, contributing to conversations that bridged academic insight with applied practice.



A number of special highlights marked the 2025 workshop. John Zorich received a plaque from the Texas A&M Foundation in recognition of the Sylvia & John Zorich Planned Gift, established in 2024 to support educational initiatives within the university. In addition, Swee-Teng Chin was honored with a plaque for being named this year's Zorich's Lecturer.



The event also celebrated student accomplishments through the TidBit Session competition. Several students from the Department of Statistics were recognized among the winners: Sara Antonijevic (4th place), Rebecca Lee (3rd place), Carrie Lei (3rd place), Alexander Coulter (2nd place), and Minjee Kim (1st place). Their presentations demonstrated creativity, strong analytical skills, and the practical impact of statistical thinking.

Still in its early years, Zorich's Applied Statistics Workshop is quickly establishing itself as an important collaborative tradition at Texas A&M University—one that continues to encourage interdisciplinary engagement, highlight student excellence, and strengthen ties between academia and industry.

8TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM CANCER RESEARCH: BASIC SCIENCE TO BIOINFORMATICS



The 8th Annual Cancer Research: Basic Science to Bioinformatics Symposium was held on November 7, 2025, bringing together a diverse community of researchers, students, and faculty committed to advancing cancer science through interdisciplinary collaboration. Organized by the Department of Statistics in partnership with the Department of Biology, the symposium has become a signature event at Texas A&M University, strengthening the connection between quantitative and biological research and fostering innovation across disciplines.

This year's symposium offered a full day of scientific presentations covering a wide array of topics, including tumor microenvironment analysis, molecular mechanisms of disease progression, high-dimensional data modeling, and computational frameworks for studying cancer at both cellular and genomic levels. Invited speakers shared cutting-edge findings, demonstrating how the integration of rigorous statistical methodology with biological experimentation can propel new discoveries and open fresh avenues of research.

A highlight of the event was the DataBlitz session, a fast-paced format where participants delivered concise presentations designed to showcase emerging research in just a few minutes. The rapid-fire presentations encouraged active engagement, enabling attendees to quickly explore a wide range of topics and identify potential opportunities for collaboration. Attendees praised the format for its energy and ability to introduce novel ideas in an accessible way.

The symposium also featured a vibrant Poster Session, giving undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral scholars the opportunity to present their work and receive feedback from faculty, peers, and visiting researchers. Among the award recipients was Daniel Hu, an undergraduate student in the Department of Statistics, who earned second place in the undergraduate poster competition.

As the symposium celebrates its eighth year, it continues to provide a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and professional development. By bringing together statisticians, biologists, computational scientists, and students at all levels, the event exemplifies Texas A&M's dedication to advancing cancer research through multidisciplinary approaches.

ENVIBAYES WORKSHOP ON COMP

From October 29 to October 31, 2025, the Department of Statistics at Texas A&M University hosted the EnviBayes Workshop on Complex Environmental Data, an international meeting focused on advancing Bayesian statistical methods for complex environmental applications. Organized by Dr. Rajarshi Guhaniyogi, the workshop brought together some of the world's foremost leaders in environmental Bayesian statistics, representing prestigious universities, major national laboratories, and leading research institutions.

Over three days, the workshop created a dynamic environment for scientific exchange, collaboration, and mentorship, attracting 54 participants spanning the full career spectrum from distinguished senior researchers to early-career postdoctoral scholars and graduate students. The program featured three plenary talks, 21 invited presentations, and research highlights from the 2023 and 2024 EnviBayes Student Paper Award winners, providing attendees with a comprehensive overview of current advances and emerging directions in the field.

Sessions covered a range of cutting-edge topics, including scalable Bayesian methods for analyzing massive environmental datasets, interpretable deep learning techniques for remote sensing and satellite imagery, and advanced modeling approaches for air pollution, climate systems, hydrological processes, and other complex environmental phenomena, illustrating the critical role that innovative statistical methodology plays in addressing pressing environmental challenges.

A particularly notable highlight for the Department of Statistics was the participation of former PhD student Samuel Gailliot, who was invited to present

as one of the Student Paper Award winners, reflecting the continued impact of Texas A&M alumni in the field of environmental statistics.

In addition to formal presentations, the workshop featured a lively poster session showcasing research from emerging scholars at institutions including UT Austin, Colorado State University, Johns Hopkins University, Penn State University, the University of Connecticut, and Texas A&M University. The poster session provided an opportunity for graduate students and early-career researchers to present their work, receive feedback from established experts, and engage in meaningful discussions that could lead to future collaborations.

In line with its commitment to fostering new talent, the workshop offered partial financial support to all registered graduate students, ensuring that early-career participants could attend and benefit fully from the program. Beyond the scheduled talks and poster presentations, the workshop encouraged informal discussions and networking opportunities, fostering a collegial atmosphere in which participants could share ideas, exchange perspectives, and explore interdisciplinary collaborations. The diversity of participants and topics ensured a rich environment for mentorship and the exchange of knowledge, strengthening connections between established researchers and the next generation of statisticians in environmental science.

The 2025 EnviBayes Workshop on Complex Environmental Data successfully combined high-quality scientific content with opportunities for professional development, mentorship, and community building.

LEX ENVIRONMENTAL DATA 2025

The event highlighted the growing importance of Bayesian methods in addressing complex environmental problems and demonstrated the breadth of research being conducted at leading institutions around the world. By bringing together a wide range of researchers, from senior leaders to emerging scholars, and by supporting graduate student participation, the workshop reinforced the critical role of collaboration, innovation, and mentorship in advancing both the methodology and application of environmental statistics.

Texas A&M University and the Department of Statistics are proud to have hosted this important event, which not only showcased cutting-edge research but also strengthened the connections and collaborations that will drive future advances in the field. The workshop's success reflects the dedication and leadership of Dr. Guhaniyogi, the contributions of all speakers and participants, and the department's ongoing commitment to fostering excellence in research, education, and mentorship in environmental Bayesian statistics.



WELCOME STUDENTS PARTY



On Saturday, September 20th, the department hosted the Welcome Students Party to warmly greet incoming Ph.D. students. The event provided a lively and inviting atmosphere where new students could connect with fellow graduate students, meet key department leaders—including the Department Head and Director of the Ph.D. Program—and start building a sense of community within the department. Food and refreshments were served, creating opportunities for informal conversations, questions, and sharing experiences that help forge lasting connections to support students throughout their doctoral studies.



In addition to socializing and networking, the Welcome Students Party offered new Ph.D. students a chance to learn more about departmental resources, student organizations, and upcoming events. Current students shared tips for navigating the program, balancing research and coursework, and making the most of opportunities within the department, helping set the stage for a successful and engaging start to their graduate journey.

HALLOWEEN BBQ PARTY

On Sunday, October 26th, SGSA hosted the Halloween BBQ Party for graduate students, faculty, and staff. The festive gathering brought the department community together for an afternoon filled with food, outdoor games, and family-friendly activities, including a playground area for children. Attendees enjoyed the relaxed, seasonal atmosphere while socializing, reconnecting with colleagues, and spending quality time with friends and family. The event offered a fun and welcoming space to celebrate the season and strengthen connections across the department.



STATA SOCIAL

On September 24th, the department attended the annual STATA Social held at the STATA office, bringing together graduate students, faculty, and staff with STATA employees for an evening of networking and professional connection. STATA is a leading statistical software company widely used in research, data analysis, and academia. This longstanding annual event is designed to strengthen ties between the department and the STATA community while giving attendees the opportunity to learn more about career paths, software development, and real-world applications of statistical tools. Food was served, creating a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere that encouraged conversation and engagement. Throughout the evening, students had numerous opportunities to network with STATA professionals, ask questions about industry careers, and gain insight into how statistical software is developed and applied in practice.





THANKSGIVING POTLUCK

On November 21, the department came together to celebrate its annual Thanksgiving Potluck, bringing faculty, staff, and graduate students together for an afternoon of food, fellowship, and gratitude. The event created a warm and welcoming environment where members of the department could step away from their busy schedules to share a meal and enjoy time with one another. The potluck featured a wide variety of dishes, reflecting the diverse backgrounds and traditions within the department.

In addition to the Thanksgiving celebration, this year's potluck also served as a special occasion to honor and celebrate Dr. Pourahmadi's retirement. Attendees took time to reflect on his distinguished career and lasting impact on the department, expressing appreciation for his years of service, mentorship, and scholarship. The combined celebration made the gathering especially meaningful, highlighting both gratitude for the season and recognition of an important milestone within the department.





HOLIDAY PARTY

On December 5th, the department held its annual Holiday Party at Casa do Brasil, bringing together faculty, staff, and some of their family members to celebrate another successful year. The event provided a warm and festive atmosphere where attendees could enjoy a delicious meal, connect with colleagues, and celebrate the accomplishments and milestones of the past year. As an annual tradition, the Holiday Dinner continues to be a cherished opportunity for the department community to come together in a relaxed and joyful setting.

This year's celebration also featured a special recognition of Dr. Brani Vidakovic as he steps down from his role as Department Head. A video presentation highlighted kind words and heartfelt messages from colleagues and students, expressing gratitude for his leadership, dedication, and contributions to the department. The evening combined the festive spirit of the holidays with meaningful recognition, making it a memorable occasion for all who attended.



OTHER STUDENT EVENTS



On August 19th, the department hosted the New PhD Student Orientation, welcoming incoming doctoral students and providing an overview of program expectations and resources. The event also offered opportunities to meet faculty and connect with peers as they embarked on their PhD studies.



On August 20th, the department hosted the New MS Student Orientation, welcoming incoming master's students and introducing them to key program information and resources. The event also offered a chance to meet faculty and connect with fellow students as they began their graduate journey.



On October 6th, the Departmental Climate Committee hosted a Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration, bringing together faculty, staff, and students to enjoy festive treats and activities. The event celebrated community, inclusion, and cultural appreciation in a warm and welcoming setting.



On November 10th, the department hosted the ASA New Membership Luncheon, welcoming new members and offering a friendly space to connect with the statistics community. The event provided a warm introduction to the opportunities and resources available through the ASA.



FALL 2025 GRADUATES

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Cristian Rene Aponte | Adam Kyle Authur | Christopher Coleman Cannon | Joshua Robert Davila
| Danny L. Davis | Rohan Girish | Drew M. Kearny | Bradlee M. Klares | Stephen John Labuda |
Thanh Tin Lam | Isaac A. Martinez | Dylan Mani Mathew | Neha Rajganesh | Presley Ann Rippey |
Emma Maria Samuelsson | Michael Armas Scott | Sandip K. Singh | Rhiannon Kathryn Stracener |
Fatin Shadab Yasin

MS ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS

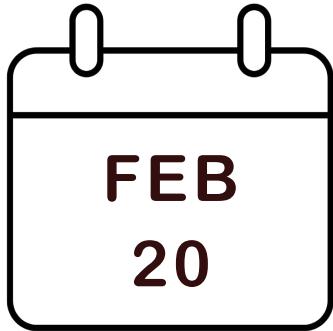
Mason Flannery | Bradley Hymas | Drew Kearny | Yuzhu Chen | Hayley Hawkins |
Phuc Nguyen | Ayaan Omair | Gauri Pawar | Kaiqi Zhao

MS DISTANCE STUDENTS

Jillian L. Brooks | Jace Christian Nelson | Michael Andrew Potter | Luke T. Stafford |
Jack Gavin Cunningham | Lauren Ashleigh Pierce | Matthew Christopher Russell

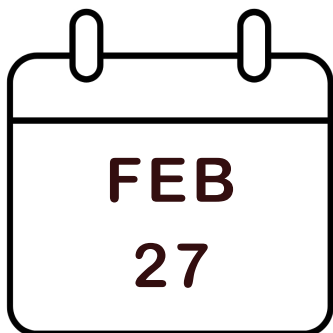
MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

UPCOMING EVENTS



11:30 - 12:20 PM

Colloquium: Chris Geoga



11:30 - 12:20 PM

Colloquium: Ana-Maria Staicu

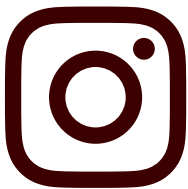


**8:00 AM - 4:40 PM &
8:30 AM - 12:30PM**

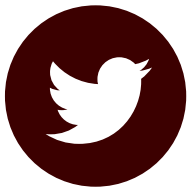
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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Statistics

3143 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843

(979) 845-3141
statlinks@stat.tamu.edu

