

# The Mu Sigma Rho

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## News from the Chapters

### South Carolina Alpha Chapter - Medical University of South Carolina

- Seven students were initiated into Mu Sigma Rho. They are Vicki Benard, Jodie Ecklund, Davis Gates, Dan Kajdasz, Kevin Nelson, Joyce Nicholas, and Rick Thompson.
- New officers elected for 1994-95 were as follows: Donna Daniel, president; Vicki Benard, vice president; Dan Kajdasz, secretary; and Paul Nietert, treasurer.
- Mu Sigma Rho sponsored a "Welcome New Students" social to provide an opportunity for the department's new students to meet the faculty, staff and other students in an informal atmosphere.
- The chapter also co-sponsored the Graduate Student Association spring picnic for students, faculty and staff in the College of Graduate Studies by providing the desserts!!
- The chapter sponsored a trip to the 1995 ASA Winter Conference in Raleigh.

### South Carolina Beta Chapter - University of South Carolina

- The Mu Sigma Rho statistical honor society is proud to announce that this is the seventh year of its existence at the University of South Carolina. This has been an eventful year with hard work and fun.
- The first meeting was held in September with new members inducted and officers elected. The new members this year include one undergraduate and six graduate students. The new undergraduate member is Scott Nix. The graduate members are Madeline Boyle (BS from ETSU), Carrie Jones (BS from University of South Carolina), Laurie Little (BS from University of Vermont), Arzu Onar (BS from UNC, Chapel Hill), Jennifer Simsick (BS from Fredonia, NY), and Shailaja Chilappagari (MS from Clemson University). The new officers for this year are Nairanjana Dasgupta, president; Jason Owen, vice president; Scott Sheridan, secretary and Duane Heydt, treasurer. Dr. Don Edwards is the faculty advisor.

- We are proud to announce some achievements of our past members. **Duane Heydt**, our undergraduate member of last year, is now pursuing his masters in biostat at USC, Columbia. Our past graduate members have done us proud, too. The three PhD students, **Edwin Lee**, **Mindy McCann**, and **Shiow Jen Lee**, are now assistant professors. Edwin is at James Madison; Mindy, at Oklahoma State; and Shiow Jen, at West Florida. **James Lewis** (MS, 1994) is now a member of the teaching staff at Lake View High School, Lake View, SC and **David Mason** is employed as a Quality Assurance Manager at Spring Master/ Screw Machine, Greer, SC.

- This year Mu Sigma Rho co-sponsored the trip to the ASA winter conference at Raleigh where we participated in the College Bowl. The main team consisting of Jason, Jonathan, Laurie and Nairajana were narrowly defeated by the finalists, Bowling Green. Other members, Scott Street, Melinda Higgins and Duane Heydt, joined "mixed" teams in the Bowl. The experience was both educational and fun.

- We plan to start this year with a banquet to give the old and new members a chance to get to know each other. Various other activities are planned -- lectures, seminars, and picnics, just to name a few. All these events promise to make this a busy and fun year.

### Utah Beta Chapter - Brigham Young University

- At the first meeting of the new academic year, the new officers elected are **Shane Reese**, president; **Russell Earl**, vice president; and **William Christiansen**, secretary. The faculty advisor is Dr. J. L. Madrigal.

- In this year the following undergraduates were initiated: **Benjamin Ahlstrom**, **Robert Bachler**, **Ellen Burns**, **Joseph Campbell**, **John Evans**, **Guy Foutz**, **David Fowler**, **Mary Furtado**, **Jerrold Gardner**, **John Hall**, **Susan Haraguchi**, **Brian Harris**, **Carrie Hill**, **Clint Hunter**, **Gregory Jones**, **Julene Kemp**, **Carla Lange**, **Paul Morgan**, **Evan Morrison**, **Brett Ogden**, **Michael Richmond**, **Dana Roberts**, **Scott Shellman**, **Laura Lysenko**, **Michele Ward**, **Gregory Warnes**, and **Kenton Wride**. Also the following graduate students were recognized for their academic achievements in statistics: **Russell Earl**, **Shane Reese**, **Robert Peck**, **James Puigmire**, and **Jason Burt**. All of these students were recognized at our Mu Sigma Rho Initiation Banquet held in October.

- **Robert Peck**, **John Hilton** and **Jonathan Blake**, all Master of Science students, presented papers at the annual meeting of the American Statistical Association in Toronto.

- The Mu Sigma Rho lecture was delivered by Dr. H. Gill Hilton who has been a member of the department since 1962.

- In winter, 1994, Mu Sigma Rho sponsored a seminar about consulting in statistics. Most of the faculty in the department participated and gave suggestions about the "how to" of consulting.

- Several recent graduates have been hired at Eli Lilly, Boots Pharmaceuticals, Morton International, Westinghouse Hanford, Hoffman LaRoche, Advanced Micro Devices, AT&T, Hewitt Associates, Nationwide Insurance Company, Pro West, and Johnson & Johnson. Their salaries range from \$33K to \$48K.

Two graduates, **Shane Pankratz** and **Gregory Snow**, started their PhD studies at Rice University and Washington State University, respectively.

- We are still working on the production of our leaflet for employers looking for statisticians. The leaflet will be used to explain the advantages of hiring members of the statistical honor society.
- For Homecoming, our chapter built a float and participated in the parade.
- Our last social events of the semester were a "Brown Bag Luncheon" and our annual Christmas party. Our Christmas party included a potluck dinner, singing, games, and a white elephant gift exchange. There were more than 85 people in attendance.
- In addition to the social events, we have had the opportunity to sponsor an ongoing service project. Several students are volunteering their time to read statistical textbooks on audiotape for blind students. We hope these efforts will prove to benefit many students in the future.
- Lastly, our chapter sponsored LARC, a program written in the department which ranks items based on pairwise comparisons. Each week Mu Sigma Rho members would enter college football scores into LARC and print a weekly Top 100 listing. This listing is displayed in the Math and Computer Building. Right next to the listing is a description of LARC and some of the statistical theory upon which it is based. It has served to stimulate interest in the department and in the field of statistics. It has generated six theses! Final rankings ... Penn State #1 and Nebraska #2. Sorry AP and CNN/USA Today, you blew it!

### Vermont Alpha Chapter - The University of Vermont

- The installation ceremonies for the new University of Vermont (or "UVM" for Universitas Viridis Montis) chapter of Mu Sigma Rho took place on April 18, 1994 in the beautiful old Phi Beta Kappa room of the Waterman Building on campus. Bob Hogg, an honorary member of MSR, was given permission to act as our official installation officer. Dr. Hogg had delivered lectures earlier in the day as a part of our College of Engineering and Mathematics Lecture Series: "Continuous Quality Improvement in Higher Education" and "Lessons Learned from a Quality Journey".
- Fifteen students became charter members of our state's Alpha Chapter, comprised of two seniors and 13 Masters students in statistics or biostatistics. Any undergraduate or graduate student with interests in statistics is encouraged to participate in activities of our Statistics Students' Association. These have included social occasions both on and off campus as well as having visitors come to campus for lectures or career discussions. However, we are especially proud of the accomplishments of these honor society members.

### Virginia Alpha Chapter - Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

- The current officers are: James E. Mays, president; Tim Robinson, vice president; and Angie McMahan, secretary-treasurer. The faculty advisor is Dr. Jeffrey B. Birch.
- The Virginia Alpha Chapter sponsored two colloquia: Dr. Ray Myers, professor at VPI and SU, spoke on "Designing Experiments in Stages" and Dr. John Boling of the SAS Institute spoke on "The Evolution of the SAS System: A Virginia Tech Connection".

- Initiated into Mu Sigma Rho were four undergraduate and seven graduate students. They are Jennifer Sue Johnson, Rolando D. Arrivillaga, Tonya A. Clark, and Judith Mili with graduate students Obaid M. Al-Saidy, Gloria J. Broadwater, Georgia Ioannou, Yew Haur Lee, Michael T. Newell, Scott D. Patterson, and Dan J. Spitzner. Dr. John C. Boling was awarded an honorary membership.

- Seventeen BS degrees were awarded with students going to employers like Washington Consulting Group and graduate schools like Virginia Tech, Florida and Cornell. Salary range was \$31K to \$42K.

Nineteen MS degrees were awarded with students going to work for companies like First Union Bank, Westat, SAS, Trigon, Corning, State Corporation Commission and Smith Kline & French with salaries ranging from \$40K to \$47K.

Some destinations of the PhD graduates were Procter and Gamble, and assistant professor positions at Rutgers University and Sana University (Yemen).

## President's Column

This being my first experience at writing a President's Column, it is difficult to find a starting sentence that doesn't sound suspiciously like "Four score and seven years ago ..." or the opening sentence to a State of the Union address. So, I won't try: The state of the Society is unquestionably good. Bob Stephenson's three years as president have seen growth in the number of chapters nationwide as well as several very worthy Society activities including invited paper sessions at the Joint Meetings 1992-94. The society owes him a debt of gratitude for his hard work. While we are at it, we also need to warmly thank John Wasik and Carol Lancaster, who have each agreed to continue for three more years in the time-consuming and relatively unglamorous roles of Secretary/Treasurer and Newsletter Editor, respectively.

The Society sponsored a special invited panel session at the Toronto meeting, "The Future of Mu Sigma Rho". Bob, John, Carol, Chuck McCulloch of Cornell, and Jose Madrigal of Brigham Young gave thought-provoking presentations to a small (it was 8 a.m., folks) but enthusiastic audience, followed by a discussion so lively that it had to be cut off when the session time expired and continued next morning in the Board meeting. Topics of discussion included frustration on the part of smaller colleges at being able to start Mu Sigma Rho chapters, and possible activities Mu Sigma Rho could undertake. Three ideas that will be followed up this year and next are induction of students from small colleges into Mu Sigma Rho affiliate chapters at ASA chapters, Internet activities for Mu Sigma Rho, and an attempt at continuation of the College Bowl.

Though there are currently nearly 20 chapters of Mu Sigma Rho, many outstanding students nationwide with statistics majors or minors currently have no avenue to be inducted. Many of these students study at liberal arts or community colleges, which can only muster a few eligible students in any given year, not enough to create a chapter. One way around this is for several colleges in close proximity to form a joint chapter, such as has been done by Bowdoin, Bates and Colby Colleges in Maine. Another is for the student to join an existing chapter at a nearby university, as Grinnell College students in Iowa have done with Iowa State. Both these possibilities have been brought about by 1993 changes in the Constitution and Bylaws. A further possibility for accommodating these students is to form Mu Sigma Rho affiliate chapters in conjunction with ASA Chapters, and allow students to be inducted under the supervision of the ASA Chapter members. The Constitution already allows affiliate chapters, though there is no provision for these to induct students. A subcommittee has been appointed to investigate the logistics of this idea, and to make any necessary proposed amendments to the Bylaws by this summer.

Chuck McCulloch suggested that one useful Mu Sigma Rho activity would be the creation of an on-line employment register on the Internet, where employers could deposit their announcements for job positions in statistics, and job candidates could advertise their availability and qualifications. There is some question as to the legality of this idea, but certainly Mu Sigma Rho could have a presence on the Internet in the form of (at least) a Home Page on the World Wide Web, suggested by Ralph St. John of Bowling Green. The Home Page could include information on required student qualifications to join, requirements for forming a new chapter or affiliate chapter, recent national and chapter activities, ideas and strategies for chapter activities and more. The information could be accessed for free, instantaneously, by students interested in joining Mu Sigma Rho or groups of individuals interested in forming a new chapter. Another committee is looking into logistics but we expect to have a Mu Sigma Rho Home Page by the Orlando meeting. Watch for an announcement.

As we have been told, last month's excellent Winter meeting in Raleigh was the LAST (and they aren't kidding, or so they say) Winter meeting. The fourth College Bowl was held, organized and run by Ralph St. John and Linda Young of Nebraska, and narrated by ASA President Mitchell Gail. Despite some last minute cancellations, a total of eight teams were assembled and a lively competition was held, with one of the two Nebraska teams winning the final at the buzzer against Bowling Green. An upcoming AmStat News should have more details about the competition. The College Bowl has always been held in conjunction with a Winter Meeting with no other official sponsor. Those who have participated in it feel it is a fine activity to get students involved in a professional meeting, and has great educational potential.