Greetings from the Department Head

It has been a successful and transitional year for the Department, and I’m excited to share our news with you. We have two new unit assistants, Brenda Kindschi and Jeanne Parks, and they are doing a great job whipping us into shape. Last December, our long-time assistant, Fran Mihura, retired. It was sad to see her go after a long time with us, but we are happy that she can now relax and enjoy life without having to put up with us. We’ve been fortunate to be able to update some of our facilities, especially our front office and our conference room. We’ve also updated our classroom with new instructional equipment. I’m also pleased to announce that we have hired a new faculty member, Adam Molnar, who specializes in statistical education. His doctorate is from the University of Georgia, and he’ll be an excellent addition to our department. The other big news is the addition of a new degree program, an MS in applied statistics, which will be offered online. We are considering this to be a professional masters degree, and it will be the first fully online degree in the College of Arts & Sciences.

Please enjoy this newsletter, and please forward any news to us. We love hearing from you. And allow me to express a special thanks to Carla Goad who has done a wonderful job putting it together. Let us know if you are ever on the OSU campus. We would love to visit with you.

Mark

Meet our New Office Staff!

Brenda Kindschi (left) joined the department as Senior Administrative Support Specialist in January 2015. Brenda worked in the College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s office for the past six years. Brenda’s son, Austin, is a 2015 OSU graduate with a BS in Animal Science.

Jeanne Parks (right) was hired in February 2015 as the new Senior Administrative Support Assistant for the department. Jeanne is new to OSU. Jeanne has two sons, RD and Dillon, and two grandchildren. Jeanne has been a cast member of the Pawnee Bill Wild West Show for the last 20 years.
Faculty Notes

J. Leroy Folks (retired in 1998) is the current commander of VFW Post 129 in Stillwater.

Ole J. Forsberg (PhD 2014) joined the Department as a Visiting Assistant Professor this year. He collaborates with several researchers in the College of Education, as well as publishing in the field of election statistics. In May, he was elected to the Vice-Presidency of the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Statistical Association (OCASA).

Carla Goad was invited by tri-societies: American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, Soil Science Society of America to develop and present a 4-part webinar Introduction to Experimental Design and Analysis. This webinar was presented in both the spring and fall semesters of 2014 with participants from around the world. Carla’s son, Michael, graduated in Spring 2015 from OSU with a BS in Mechanical Engineering Technology.

Josh Habiger served as President of the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Statistical Association. In April he and Kate celebrated the birth of their new baby boy, Max. He is currently adviser for David Watts, Cherlinca Boyd and Tamanna Hossain.

They will all graduate soon . . . if they continue to work and study hard.

Additionally, Josh began a Big Data Poster Series for undergraduates. It has been very successful.

Ye Liang has been teaching two graduate level courses: Bayesian Analysis and Multivariate Analysis. His recent research focus is spatio-temporal models, Bayesian multiple testing and longitudinal analysis. He has been advising a Ph.D. student who is supported by an NSF grant on climate change research.

Mark Payton is teaching biomedical statistics courses for the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Center for Health Sciences in Tulsa. He's also enjoyed serving as department head. His son Riley is a freshman at OSU, and daughter Mackenzie is a sophomore at Stillwater High School.

Lan Zhu earned her PhD degree from Cornell University and joined the faculty in August 2007. She was promoted to the rank of associate professor in June 2013. Her research interests mainly focus on genetic statistics. Dr. Zhu is married to Dr. Hongbo Yu who is an associate professor in OSU’s Geography Department.

Tamer Elbayoumi earned his PhD degree from Western Michigan University, June 2013. He joined the faculty as a Visiting Assistant Professor in August 2013. In July 2014, Dr. Elbayoumi was promoted to the rank of Assistant Professor at his home University, Mansoura University, Egypt. His research interests focus on non-parametric modeling. Tamer has three children: son, Nooreldin (a 7th grade honors student); 5th grade daughter, Nada, and Pre-K son, Nadeem.

The Oklahoma Chapter of the ASA met on December 5, 2014 at the University of Central Oklahoma. The speaker was Dr. Dwight Adams, Director of Forensic Science Institute at UCO. Among his career accomplishments, Dr. Adams chaired the FBI research team that developed DNA testing procedures. Dr. Adams addressed the role of the Institute at UCO and the need for statistical analysis in forensic science.

The spring meeting was held in Stillwater on April 27. Masters candidate Tamanna Hossain presented “fMRI Analysis Using R.”

For questions about membership and activities, contact President Tracy Morris at TMorris2@uco.edu.

Women in Science

Oklahoma NSF EPSCoR sponsored a Women in Science Conference on October 14, 2014 at the Maike Center on the ORU campus in Tulsa. This conference is designed to encourage young women in grades 6-12 to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Lan Zhu and Mindy McCann attended the event hosting a booth “How Statistics Can Help in our Daily Life.” The Statistics Department was one of several OSU departments in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) that attended the event.

Activities at the Statistics booth included “hands on” demonstrations of how the knowledge of statistics can assist in the decision making process.

Students from 26 area middle schools and 28 junior high schools attended the conference. Dr. Zhu reported that over 200 students visited the booth that day.

Lan and Mindy anticipate attending again in Fall 2015.

Mindy McCann explains a probability gaming concept to a middle school student at the Women in Science Conference.
Technology Upgrade

MSCS 317 has experienced an upgrade this year. This room has served the department as a calculator lab in the 70’s, a computer lab until the mid-90’s, and a (chalk-n-talk) classroom until recently.

The room is now equipped with a computer, SMART® Board, and whiteboards. There is also new movable seating for classes or meetings. This room is used for student presentations and graduate level classes.

Faculty: Tamer Elbayoumi, Nishantha (Sam) Samarakoon, Ye Liang, Lan Zhu, and Josh Habiger; Graduate Students: Cherlinca Boyd, Tamanna Hossain, and Xiaowei Hu wish Fran a happy retirement.

Fran Mihura Retires

After working 31 years at OSU, Fran Mihura retired. For the last 23 years, Fran worked for the Department of Statistics.

The Department held a reception for Fran in December. We wish Fran the very best in her retirement.

The room is equipped with a computer, SMART® Board, and whiteboards. There is also new movable seating for classes or meetings. This room is used for student presentations and graduate level classes.

Lan Zhu annotates her class notes using the SMART® Board.

Larry Claypool (retired in 2007) wishes Fran a happy retirement at her reception.

Josh Habiger uses the SMART® Board to project class notes and demonstrate software for his Multivariate Methods class.

Faculty: Tamer Elbayoumi, Nishantha (Sam) Samarakoon, Ye Liang, Lan Zhu, and Josh Habiger; Graduate Students: Cherlinca Boyd, Tamanna Hossain, and Xiaowei Hu wish Fran a happy retirement.

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Martha Gipson Selected as Orange Gown Graduate for Spring 2015 Commencement

Stillwater native, Martha Gipson, was selected to wear the Orange Gown at the Spring 2015 Commencement ceremony. The Orange Gown Graduate leads the procession of College of Arts and Sciences graduates and carries the College gonfalon. Additionally the Orange Gown Graduate is the first graduate from the College to walk across the stage at Commencement. Martha is the first Statistics student to be named for the honor of the Orange Gown.

Martha is a double degree student earning a BS in Statistics and a BS in Mathematics. She has also minored in French. Martha is an Honors College graduate, completing Honors projects in both Statistics and Mathematics. She was named the Outstanding Senior in Statistics for 2015. Martha will continue her studies in the doctoral program in Statistics at Texas A & M University beginning in August 2015.

For the College of Arts and Sciences interview with Martha go to: http://cas.okstate.edu/college-news/1011-a-s-names-2015-spring-commencement-orange-gown-graduate

MS in Applied Statistics Online Degree Approved

This online degree in Applied Statistics is different from our on-campus MS degree in that the traditional theoretical coursework is not required. This is a terminal degree and is not for those students who wish to pursue a statistics degree at the doctoral level. Know of someone interested in this degree? Please have him/her contact Mindy McCann for more information about this degree option: mindy.mccann@okstate.edu.

Student News

Undergraduates

Abigail Hebenstreit (sophomore) was selected for the Study Abroad Program in Spring 2015. Abby spent the semester studying at the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield, England.

Derek Wietelman (senior) was selected as the Claypool Scholarship recipient for 2015-2016 year. Derek is completing a BS in Statistics with a minor in Math and a BA in Political Science with a minor in Environmental Economics.

Graduate

Yimin Zhang (left) and Ole Forsberg (right) were both given the Carl Marshall Outstanding Doctoral Graduate Award for 2014.

Yimin is now an assistant professor at Villanova, and Ole is a visiting assistant professor at OSU.

Sayed Mostafa was given the Robert Morrison Award for Outstanding Masters Graduate in 2014. Sayed is continuing his doctoral studies at OSU.

Graduating Senior Victor Ndiritu is also an Honors College graduate. Victor plans to pursue his Masters in Quantitative Financial Economics at OSU.

It is through the generosity of our donors that the scholarship and awards listed here are possible. Thank you! See the last page for more information about donating.
In December 2014 Alex Scott (BS 2014) joined American Fidelity accepting an actuary position. Lucas Shannon (BS 2013) also works at American Fidelity. Both Alex and Lucas are advancing as they successfully complete actuarial exams.

Sean Bulleigh (BS 2014) will complete his Masters in Accounting at OSU at the end of Summer 2015. After some time at home in Minnesota this fall, he will join the Grant Thornton firm in Tulsa in January 2016.

Ryan Lusk (BS 2011, MS 2014) works in the corporate offices of Quik Trip located in Tulsa.

Zhenhua Sang (MS 2014) works as a Data Analyst for QLX in New Orleans.

Jordan Crabbe (PhD 2013) is now an assistant professor of mathematics at University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College.

Xuesong Li (MS 2009, PhD 2013) joined Wintrust Financial as Financial Analyst after graduating and was promoted as Sr Financial Analyst in Jan 2015. In February she had a baby boy, Fengrui Zhang.

Hung-Chih (Hank) Ku (MS 2007, PhD 2012) completed a three-year post-doc at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and has accepted a tenure track faculty position at DePaul University beginning August 2015.

Kefeng Wang (MS 2010) has been working as a biostatistician for the last three years in the Dept. of Neurology of the Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Heather M. Orr (BS 2009) came to work for Institutional Research and Information Management at OSU as a Programming Analyst in early 2015. Previously Heather worked for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education in OKC.

Leila Zelnick (MS 2009) is a PhD candidate in biostatistics at the University of Washington (expected graduation August 2015). She is employed part-time as Research Biostatistician at Kidney Research Institute in Seattle.

Crystal Turner (BS 2008) earned her Masters in Qualitative Financial Economics at OSU in 2012 and now works as a Rates Analyst for ONE Gas in Tulsa.

Tim Maharry (PhD 2006) is the chair of the Dept of Mathematics and Computer Science at NWOSU in Alva, OK. Tim’s daughters, Meagan and Laura, are in high school and son, Lucas, will be in the first grade.

Vinay Cheruvu (MS 2002) completed his doctorate degree at Case Western Reserve University and is now an Assistant Professor of Biostatistics at Kent State University.

Diane Sweeney (PhD 1999) is now working for Emergent BioSolutions in Gaithersburg, MD as Principal Biostatistician.

Gerald Meraz (MS 1998) is the Quality Manager for ASCO Industries, located in Stillwater, OK. ASCO Industries is a worldwide company that designs and manufactures components for the aerospace industry.

Rebecca Moore (MS 1997) is an adjunct instructor for the University of Central Oklahoma.

Andy Maumoumoustakas (MS 1984, PhD 1989) is a Professor of Statistics in the Agricultural Statistics Lab at the University of Arkansas. He has been at Arkansas since his graduation in 1989.

Joyce (Seeliger) Lambert (BS 1979, staff 1997-98) has been employed at Ditch Witch in Perry, OK since 2000. Joyce and Linc are now grandparents!

Marilyn Belwood (MS 1976) completed her doctorate degree in Educational Psychology with a concentration in Statistics and Measurement at Southern Illinois University in 1991. She has worked at the Missouri Valley College (in Marshall, MO) since 1998 teaching math and statistics, and is now the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning.

We love hearing from our alumni! Send your personal or professional updates to us at statistics@okstate.edu.

If you can help us locate other OSU Statistics alumni, we would appreciate it.
Donate to the Department

Friends and Alumni who wish to make a financial gift to the Department of Statistics at OSU should go online to http://www.osugiving.com/statistics. Donors can choose from the following fund accounts:

Statistics Department Fund # 22-4350
The Statistics Department Fund supports guest speaker activities.

P. Larry Claypool Undergraduate Statistics Scholarship # 22-5290
The P. Larry Claypool Undergraduate Statistics Scholarship is awarded to an outstanding undergraduate student.

Carl Marshall Award # 22-4110
The Carl Marshall Award is presented to the outstanding Ph.D. graduate.

Robert D. Morrison Award # 22-8050
The Robert D. Morrison Award is presented to the outstanding M.S. graduate.

David L. Weeks Award # 22-3210
The David L. Weeks Award supports an outstanding statistics graduate student in Experimental Design.

Retirement Gift Fund # 22-4490
The Retirement Gift Fund provides gifts for statistics faculty upon retirement.

J. Leroy Folks Award # 22-5680
The J. Leroy Folks Award honors distinguished alumni of OSU Department of Statistics.