Message from the president

The month of July was a time of transition for our Society, and I was honoured to receive the baton from **Bruce Smith**, to whom I am grateful for his guidance during my term as president-elect and for his exemplary leadership on multiple fronts, including many difficult decisions associated with SSC 2020. With Bruce, I had the pleasure working alongside **Robert Platt**, who has just completed his term as past president, and to whom I am thankful for sharing generously his experience and wisdom. Following Bruce's and Robert's able stewardship, I have big shoes to fill and am excited to welcome **Grace Yi** as the president-elect to join the executive committee.

As I welcome new board members, I want to extend my gracious thank-you to outgoing members **Henrik Stryhn**, **Thierry Duchesne**, **Lorna Deeth**, **Katherine Davies,** and **Karen Kopciuk** for their time and contributions serving on the board as regional representatives. Also, my special heartfelt thank-you to **Changbo Wu** for his tireless effort as meeting coordinator for the past five years!

In addition, I want to express my gratitude to section officers and regional association executive members, as well as all other volunteers who served, continue serving and/or agreed to serve on various committees—your efforts, ideas, and contributions have a positive impact on our Society. If you are interested in volunteering or becoming further involved in SSC activities, or if you have any suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at president@ssc.ca.

There are usually two major annual SSC gathering events: the SSC annual conference and the SSC reception during the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). It's an unusual year for both events.

While SSC 2020 was unfortunately cancelled, a few invited sessions and award presentations initially planned will be integrated into the SSC 2021 scientific program. **J. C. Loredo-Osti**, who chaired the SSC 2020 program committee, is now co-chair of the SSC 2021 program committee to share his experience and to join efforts with co-chair **Michael Escobar**. Both have been working together with **Nadia Ghazzali**, who succeeded Changbao as the meeting coordinator, and with the local organizing committee, co-chaired by **Asokan Mulayath Variyath** and **Zhaozhi Fan**. SSC 2021 is scheduled to take place at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's from June 5 to June 9, 2021. Stay tuned for more details regarding SSC 2021!

JSM 2020, which was to be held in Philadelphia, was moved online, and hence the annual JSM-SSC reception was cancelled. To provide an opportunity to connect with members, an inaugural SSC Virtual Social Mixer was successfully launched with virtual entertainment. I am greatly indebted to **Jeffrey Rosenthal** for putting together the mixer with me and for being the emcee that evening, and to **Thai-son Tang** for his technical assistance before and during the event. One of the highlights of the mixer was a spoof song performed live by Jeff (lyrics can be found at "Each Canadian Statistician").

Next year's JSM will take place in Seattle. I am thankful to **Nancy Heckman** for being the SSC representative to the JSM 2021 program committee, and to **Ying Zhang** for completing the same role for JSM 2020.

On another front, the SSC representatives (Bruce, Robert, **Shirley Mills,** and I) to the Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies (COPSS) participated in the discussion and decision to retire the COPSS R.A. Fisher Award and Lectureship (now known as the COPSS Distinguished Achievement Award and Lectureship). As one of the founding societies of COPSS, SSC has been working with COPSS on the establishment of a diverse committee that will suggest "action-oriented strategies to increase and commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our profession." More information will be shared with you when available.

This summer had many firsts for us, such as the first virtual Canadian Statistics Student Conference (CSSC) and the first SSC Virtual Social Mixer. As I write my first message as SSC president, I look forward to working with you and to serving the SSC and our profession over the coming year!

Wendy Lou

2021 SSC awards

2021 SSC awards: Call for nominations

Nominations for the 2021 SSC awards must be received by these dates:

- Gold Medal—January 31, 2021
- Honorary Member—January 31, 2021
- Distinguished Service—January 31, 2021
- Impact of Applied and Collaborative Work—January 31, 2021
- Pierre Robillard—January 31, 2021
- CRM-SSC—February 1, 2021

Nominations for the following 2021 COPSS awards must be received by December 15, 2020:

- COPSS Distinguished Achievement Award and Lectureship
- Presidents' Award
- Florence N. David Award
- George W. Snedecor Award

When making a nomination, please consider the SSC's guidelines on implicit bias (pdf).

SSC GOLD MEDAL

The Gold Medal of the SSC is awarded to a person who has made outstanding contributions to statistics, or to probability, either to mathematical developments or in applied work. The Gold Medal is intended to honour current leaders in their fields and is normally expected to be awarded to someone still active in research. The recipient should be Canadian or a permanent resident of Canada, and must have made high quality research contributions to the statistical sciences in Canada. A recipient of the Gold Medal must be a member of the SSC. A nomination consists of a recent curriculum vitae, at least four letters of support, and a suggested citation to accompany the award. A nomination is effective for three successive competitions and may be updated annually. Previous winners can be viewed here.

SSC HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Honorary Membership in the SSC is intended to honour a probabilist or a statistician or, in special circumstances, another individual who has made exceptional contributions to the development of the discipline. Nominations are open to people whose work was done primarily in Canada or who had a major impact in this country. Membership in the SSC is not a prerequisite. A nomination consists of a recent curriculum vitae, at least three letters of support, and a suggested citation to accompany the award. Previous winners can be viewed here.

SSC DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award is intended to honour a person who has contributed substantially and over a period of several years to the operation or welfare of the SSC. A nomination consists of a recent curriculum vitae, at least two letters of support, and a suggested citation to accompany the award. Previous winners can be viewed here.

Nominations for the three SSC awards—the Gold Medal, Honorary Membership, and the Distinguished Service Award—must be received on or before January 31, 2021 by the chair of the SSC awards committee, Robert Platt. The submission process is not complete until the chair has confirmed receipt of the nomination.

Chair of the SSC Awards Committee

Robert Platt

robert.platt@mcgill.ca

AWARD FOR IMPACT OF APPLIED AND COLLABORATIVE WORK

The SSC Award for Impact of Applied and Collaborative Work is given to a Canadian or to someone residing in Canada, who is a member of the SSC and who has made outstanding contributions in applied and collaborative work, the importance of which derives primarily from its relatively recent impact on a subject area outside of the statistical sciences, on an area of application or on an organization.

The essential idea is that the award is for the impact of the work (not for its degree of technical sophistication, for example). The work should demonstrate the importance of the statistical sciences to other areas of endeavour and should include an intellectual contribution to statistical science motivated by the area of application. Areas in which a substantial contribution would qualify include: formulation of new statistical questions and ideas uniquely appropriate to the subject matter discipline or the organization; development and application of conceptually new approaches appropriate to the subject matter or the organization; new implementation of the best combination of techniques to solve important and difficult research problems in the applied discipline; development of statistical methods that answer a question in another field that could not have been answered adequately before; application of creative statistical thinking with demonstration of clear understanding of the science/industry of the area of endeavour; establishment of the relative merits of alternative analytic approaches leading to guidelines useful to applied scientists in choosing among them. This list is intended to be examples of contributions and is not necessarily exhaustive.

The nomination package should consist of a letter of nomination and at least three letters of support, a curriculum vitae, a "layperson" description of the work and its impact expressed in terms that would be suitable for publicity purposes, and a citation suitable for public announcement of the award. The nomination package should also include at least two letters from non-statisticians representing the field or organization that has felt the impact of the work. The letters must address how the contributions have had a recent impact. Letters of recommendation from those not directly involved in the research are particularly encouraged. The onus is on the nominator(s) to explain the work and to provide evidence of its impact in support of the nomination.

Previous award winners can be viewed here.

Nominations must be received on or before January 31, 2021 by the chair of the committee, Tolu Sajobi. Electronic submission with PDF files is preferred. The submission process is not complete until the chair has confirmed receipt of the nomination.

Tolu Sajobi

Department of Community Health Sciences

University of Calgary

tolu.sajobi@ucalgary.ca

PIERRE ROBILLARD AWARD

The aim of the Pierre Robillard Award is to recognize the best PhD thesis defended at a Canadian university in a given year and written in the fields covered by *The Canadian Journal of Statistics*. The award consists of a certificate, a monetary prize, and a one-year membership in the SSC. The winner will be invited to give a talk based on the thesis at the 2021 annual meeting of the Society; assistance with expenses to attend the meeting may be provided. The winner will also be invited to submit a paper to *The Canadian Journal of Statistics*.

Submitted theses will be evaluated by a committee whose members are appointed by the president of the SSC; their decision will be final. Judging will take into account the originality of the ideas and techniques, the possible applications and their treatment, and the potential impact on the statistical sciences. In any given year, no more than one winner will be selected; however, the committee may arrive at the conclusion that none of the submitted theses merits the award.

If accepted, the paper will be identified as being based on the thesis which won the 2019 Pierre Robillard Award; the names of the university and the thesis supervisor will be clearly indicated. The thesis supervisor could be coauthor of the paper. The Pierre Robillard Award committee chair must receive the thesis and a nominating letter from the thesis supervisor by January 31, 2021.

It is imperative that the supervisors address the three criteria below in their letters:

1. The originality of the ideas and techniques, as well as a description of the exact contribution of the student when the thesis is based on coauthored articles.

2. Possible applications and their treatment.

3. Potential impact on the statistical sciences.

In so doing, the supervisor may include excerpts of letters from external examiners. Complete letters from external examiners or referees will not be accepted. Official confirmation that the thesis has been defended in 2019 must also be provided. Electronic submission is strongly encouraged.

Submission Instructions

For electronic submission, the thesis should be in PDF format. The thesis and covering letter can be emailed to the committee chair. The subject header of the electronic message should be "SSC Robillard Award Submission—StudentName" and the corresponding files should be named StudentName-thesis.pdf and StudentName-cover-letter.pdf, where "StudentName" is replaced with the name of the student being nominated. Alternately, the covering letter can give a website from which an electronic copy of the thesis can be downloaded. If the thesis has to be submitted in another electronic format or on paper, the Pierre Robillard Award committee chair must be contacted before submission. Entries should include email addresses and phone numbers of both the supervisor and the student.

Previous award winners can be viewed here

Send thesis submissions for the Pierre Robillard Award to the chair of the Pierre Robillard Award committee, Yingwei Paul Peng. The submission process is not complete until the chair has confirmed receipt of the nomination.

Yingwei Paul Peng

Department of Public Health Sciences, Queen's University
yingwei.peng@queensu.ca

CRM-SSC AWARD

The Centre de recherches mathématiques (CRM) and the Statistical Society of Canada (SSC) solicit nominations for the CRM-SSC Prize, which is awarded in recognition of a statistical scientist's professional accomplishments in research during the first 15 years after earning a doctorate.

The award, which includes a $3,000 cash prize, is bestowed at most once a year upon a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada whose research was carried out primarily in Canada. Previous award winners can be viewed here.

In 2021 eligibility will be limited to candidates who received their PhD (or equivalent degree) in the year 2006 or subsequently. The CRM-SSC Prize committee may exceptionally consider candidates who have received their degree prior but very near to the year 2006, if it can be demonstrated that special circumstances, such as parental leaves or other leaves of absence from work, delayed professional achievements. Current membership in the SSC is not a prerequisite. The nominations will be examined by an advisory committee consisting of five members, three of whom are appointed by the SSC and two by the CRM. The committee is chaired by one of the two CRM representatives.

Nominations should be addressed to the director of the Centre de recherches mathématiques, and sent via email to nomination@crm.umontreal.ca by February 1, 2021. The nomination should be accompanied by at least three and no more than four letters of support, an up-to-date curriculum vitae, including a list of publications, and a suggested citation to accompany the award. As files are not carried over from one year to the next, nominations must be renewed each year.

Please submit nomination files by email to the attention of the director of the CRM at nomination@crm.umontreal.ca. The submission process is not complete until the chair has confirmed receipt of the nomination.

COPSS AWARDS

The Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies (COPSS) sponsors a number of awards which are presented at the Joint Statistical Meetings. These awards are: the Presidents' Award ("to a young member of the statistical community in recognition of outstanding contributions to the profession of statistics"), the COPSS Distinguished Achievement Award and Lectureship ("to honour the work of a present-day statistician"), the Elizabeth L. Scott Award ("to recognize an individual who exemplifies the contributions of Elizabeth L. Scott's lifelong efforts to further the careers of women in academia"), the Florence N. David Award ("to recognize a female statistician who exemplifies the contributions of Florence Nightingale David"), and the George W. Snedecor Award ("to honour an individual who was instrumental in the development of statistical theory in biometry"). Note that the David and Snedecor Awards are given only in odd-numbered years, whereas the Scott Award is given only in even-numbered years. Also note that, for the COPSS Presidents' Award, "eligible candidates either (i) will be under 41 throughout the award calendar year, or (ii) will be under age 46 throughout the award calendar year and will have received a terminal statistically-related degree no more than 12 years prior to that year."

Members of the SSC are encouraged to nominate worthy candidates for these COPSS awards. The deadline for nominations for the Distinguished Achievement Award and Lectureship, Florence N. David Award, George W. Snedecor Award, and the Presidents' Award is December 15, 2020.

For information concerning the nomination process and a list of previous winners, see here. For further information or assistance, contact **Robert Platt**, robert.platt@mcgill.ca.

Call for nominations

Société   Statistical
statistique Society
du Canada of Canada

Dear SSC community,

Members of the SSC are invited to volunteer or suggest names to fill positions in the SSC. A preliminary slate of candidates is to be presented in November by the election committee. Suggestions of names or nominations are requested for the following positions:

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SSC (Three-year terms)

President-elect

Executive Secretary

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Two-year terms)

Regional representatives from all regions:

Atlantic Provinces (1)

Quebec (2)

Ontario (2)

Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, Nunavut (1)

Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon (1)

MEMBERS OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Two positions will be elected, each for a three-year term. Candidates must be P.Stat. members.

MEMBERS OF THE ACCREDITATION APPEALS COMMITTEE

Two positions will be elected, each for a three-year term. Candidates must be P.Stat. members.

Please communicate your suggestions to any member of the election committee before October 21, 2020. More formal nominating petitions (signed by five members of the SSC) may be sent before January 15, 2021 to the chair of the election committee.

The election committee for 2020–21 consists of the following members:

Bruce Smith, Chair

David Landriault, Actuarial Science

Lei Sun, Biostatistics

Ryan Browne, BISS

Dave Campbell, Data Science and Analytics

Jean Vaillancourt, Probability

Sotirios Damouras, Statistical Education

Kim Huynh, Survey Methods

Alberto Nettel-Aguirre, Accreditation

Erica Moodie, Appointed

David Haziza, Appointed

Jemila Hamid, Appointed

Sincerely,

Bruce Smith,

Past President

past-pres@ssc.ca

CANSSI news

CANSSI Distinguished Postdoctoral Program—New!

CANSSI is introducing an updated postdoctoral program this year. The program has two phases. In the first phase, faculty are encouraged to submit proposals for two-year research and training projects. These proposals will be evaluated by CANSSI's scientific advisory committee. Successful proposals will advance to the second stage. In the second stage, postdoctoral applicants can browse the available projects and send us their applications. After CANSSI's adjudication of candidates, successful candidates and potential faculty mentors will have two weeks to meet and evaluate the fellowship. The offer is fulfilled if both the mentors and the potential fellow accept.

The postdoctoral fellow salary will be $70,000 per year plus benefits. Most of the salary and benefits are provided by CANSSI, but the host institutions will contribute salary for teaching and supervisors/co-supervisors/interdisciplinary partners will contribute 1–4 months salary total over two years plus a modest research support budget.

Learn more about this new program on our website.

CANSSI National Seminar Series

Also new this year is the CANSSI National Seminar Series. There are three components to this program: the seminar, the student session, and the journal club. Anyone can register for the seminar and join us via Zoom. The student session following the seminar is a chance for students to interact with the speaker. They are encouraged to ask questions about the speaker's research area, career, or the recommended paper. This session is moderated by **Mamadou Yauck**, a postdoctoral fellow at McGill University. He holds a PhD in Statistics from Université Laval. Mamadou's work focuses on capture-recapture methods for marketing data, respondent-driven sampling, causal inference, and network data analysis.

The journal club is a separate component run at different institutions. At least two weeks before each seminar, the speaker will recommend a paper that will help people get the most out of the seminar. While everyone is encouraged to access the paper via the National Seminar Series website and to discuss the paper with colleagues, CANSSI particularly encourages graduate student involvement, and will provide a modest level of financial support for graduate-student focused journal clubs. The form of these journal clubs is not prescribed, and may vary, but to receive CANSSI funding, these must be focused on graduate students.

This fall features three talks highlighting Hidden Markov Models.

- Sept. 24—Ruth King, University of Edinburgh
- Oct. 22—Christopher Jackson, University of Cambridge
- Nov. 26—Maciej Augustyniak, Université de Montréal

Talks will continue in the winter/spring semester on the fourth Thursday of each month. The spring theme is causal inference.

We are grateful to the NSS committee for organizing these seminars for the 2020–21 academic year: **Simon Bonner** (chair), **Gabriela Cohen-Freue**, and **Geneviève Lefebvre**.

CANSSI Graduate Student Exchange Program

We have also updated our Graduate Student Exchange Program (CANSSI-GSES). This scholarship program is designed to foster acquisition of new knowledge and skill sets, provide exposure to new areas of research and application, encourage co-discovery of new statistical methodology, provide co-supervision of thesis research, and create new and/or strengthen existing collaborations. There are two variations:

1. **Visiting Scholarships** support master's and PhD students enrolled at one Canadian university to visit another Canadian university for an extended period of time (2–4 months).
2. **Applied Immersion Scholarships** support PhD students enrolled at a Canadian university to undertake an immersive interdisciplinary or applied experience with a sponsor outside of statistics.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis but must be received at least two months before the beginning of the proposed visit. Detailed information on the program and the application process is available online.

News from the University of Calgary

With great pleasure the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at University of Calgary welcomes **Qingrun Zhang** to join the department as tenure-track assistant professor of biostatistics and health data science starting in September 2020. Qingrun Zhang received her undergraduate training in biotechnology and a PhD in statistical genetics. She has worked on statistical methods towards biological and medical big-data and applied them to genomics data. Her research is supported by NSERC, Alberta Cancer Foundation, and New Frontiers in Research Fund. Her papers have attracted 19,000 citations (Google Scholar).

Qingrun Zhang

There are also some recent additions to the department that we are thrilled about.

- **John Sang Jin Kang** began his role as an instructor of actuarial science in July 2020. He holds a PhD in actuarial science from the University of Western Ontario and would like to contribute the development of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning practice in actuarial science and incorporate software application in the actuarial education.
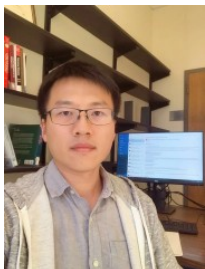
John Sang

- **Claudia Mahler** started as an instructor of statistics and mathematics in July 2020. She has previously taught statistics at the University of Idaho, and is interested in the betterment of mathematical education particularly for non-majors.

Claudia Mahler

- **Wenjun Jiang** took up an assistant professor position in actuarial data analytics in September 2019 after obtaining his PhD in actuarial science from Western University. His research interests include risk sharing, reinsurance mechanism, and dependence structure. He is also interested in bridging actuarial theories and engineering applications and exploring new methodologies in various decision-making problems in both actuarial and engineering fields.

Wenjun Jiang

News from Western University

We would like to offer our sincere congratulations to **Grace Yi** as she was selected to become president of the Statistical Society of Canada for the period of July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022.

Grace Yi

Two faculty of the Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences officially retired this past June 30, namely, **David Stanford** who joined the department in 1988 and recently received the 2020 Canadian Operational Research Society Award of Merit, and **Bruce Jones** who has been a member for 24 years and chair for five years. We are thankful for their respective contributions and wish them the best in their future endeavours.

David Stanford

Bruce Jones

Statistics 2021 Canada—call for papers

STATISTICS 2021 CANADA
concordia university · montréal · canada

Statistics 2021 Canada: 6th Canadian Conference in Applied Statistics

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT—CALL FOR PAPERS

The Conference

In keeping with the long tradition of previous decennial conferences (starting in 1971), the Department of Mathematics & Statistics and the Department of Supply Chain & Business Technology Management of Concordia University will host the Statistics 2021 Canada conference during July 15–18, 2021, on a **virtual platform.**

It was announced as an onsite conference; however, due to the evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organizers have decided to hold it in online. The mixer that was planned on the evening of July 15, 2021, will be turned into a virtual networking opportunity, thus the main presentations will take place during July 16–18, 2021.

The conference will feature plenary lectures, invited sessions, contributed sessions, and poster presentations. The presentations are dedicated to all areas of statistical sciences. The conference will also feature some invited talks in the area of actuarial mathematics, in honour of Professor **Jose Garrido**, on his retirement from Concordia University. A special session will also be organized in honour of Professor **T.D. Dwivedi**, the founder of the series of applied statistics decennial conferences at Concordia.

In addition to the traditional theoretical/applied areas, interdisciplinary research would be encouraged and promoted including major theme areas given below:

- Applied Statistics,
- Big Data, Bioinformatics,
- Biostatistics,
- Computational Statistics,
- Data Mining,
- Data Science,
- Demography,
- Econometrics,
- Health Statistics,
- Model Selection and Validation,
- Social Statistics,
- Supply Chain,
- Survival Analysis,
- Stochastic Methods in Ecology, Finance, and Engineering.

Plenary Speakers (tentative)

- **John Braun**, University of British Columbia, Okanagan Campus
- **Richard Cook**, University of Waterloo
- **Christian Genest**, McGill University
- **Robert E. Kass**, Carnegie Mellon University
- **J. Sunil. Rao**, University of Miami
- **Nancy Reid**, University of Toronto
- **Louis-Paul Rivest**, Université Laval
- **Pranab K. Sen**, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
- **David Stephens**, McGill University
- **Rob Tibshirani,** Stanford University

Organizing an Invited Session

Please send an email to **Yogen Chaubey** (**stat2021@concordia.ca**) if you would like to organize an invited session. The last date to submit a proposal for an invited session is January 31, 2021.

Graduate Poster Presentation

Graduate students are encouraged to present their research as a poster, sponsored by their supervisors. Poster presentations will be organized digitally. Graduate students interested in presenting their research may contact **Melina Mailhot** (**melina.mailhot@concordia.ca**), providing the title of their poster. The due date for submitting your poster to the coordinator is April 12, 2021. The posters will be judged by a panel of judges to decide on the two top contenders for a cash prize.

Conference Proceedings

Abstracts of the contributed and invited papers are to be submitted through the Springer conference management website

https://ocs.springer.com/PROM/

Papers accepted after the recommendation of the reviewing panel will be published in the *Springer Proceedings in Mathematics and Statistics* series. Important dates for the flow of submitted papers are as follows:

- First submission: February 15, 2021
- Assignment of reviewers: February 15, 2021
- Review due date: April 12, 2021
- Decision Notification: April 26, 2021
- Final submission: May 10, 2021

Abstract Submission:

The abstract of the intended presentation will accompany the paper submission; however, for the authors not intending to send the paper for proceedings, the last date of abstract submission is May 10, 2021. Acceptance of the abstracts will be notified within a week.

Sponsors

Centre de Recherches Mathématiques, Statistical Society of Canada, Faculty of Arts and Science (Concordia University), CANSSI, John Molson School of Business (Concordia University).

All details including the registration paper submission will be made available on the web page

https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/events/statistics-2021.html.
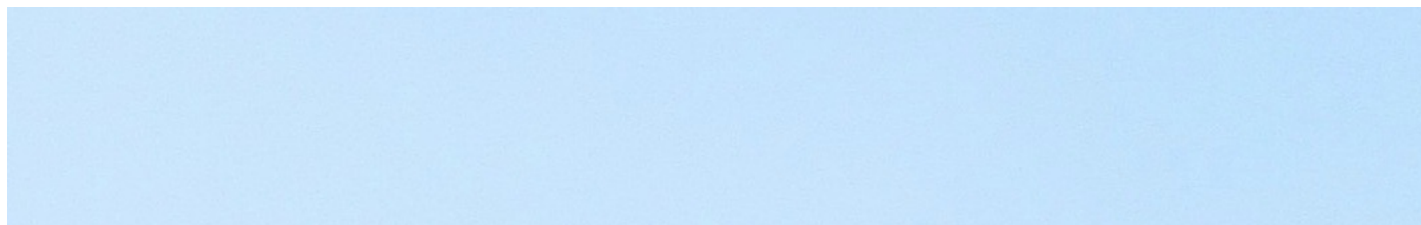
For further information, contact **Yogen Chaubey**, at **stat2021@ concordia.ca**

Yogendra P. Chaubey

Obituary: Hélène Massam (1949–2020)

Hélène Massam (1949–2020)

Hélène Massam, professor of statistics at York University, Toronto, passed away on August 22, 2020 following a cerebrovascular accident. She was 71.

Hélène, whose full maiden name was **Hélène Menexia Kampouris**, was born in Marseille, France, on January 10, 1949. Her parents were humble Greek folk who had emigrated to France before World War II and lived in difficult material and social conditions in the port area. They cherished Hélène, who was their only child, and nurtured her immense talent and the passion for learning that would lead her to live an exemplary life and have a highly successful academic career.

Hélène attended the Lycée Montgrand in Marseille, including three years of postsecondary education in the preparatory classes for the *Grandes Écoles*, France's elite education institutes known for their highly competitive entrance exams. In 1969 she entered the École normale supérieure de Fontenay-Saint-Cloud, now part of the École normale supérieure de Lyon.

After meeting geographer **Bryan Massam**, who became her husband, Hélène followed him to Montréal, where she chose to study mathematics at McGill University. She completed a BSc (Special Honours) in 1971 and embarked on graduate studies in optimization under the supervision of **Sanjo Zlobec**. She earned her MSc in 1973 and her PhD in 1977 with a thesis titled "Mathematical Programming with Cones." It is also during this period that she had her two children, Alexandra (born in 1974) and Laurent (born in 1976).

In 1977, the family moved to Ontario, and Hélène joined the University of Toronto, first as a research associate (1977–78), then as a postdoctoral fellow (1978–81), and finally as a lecturer (1981–84). It is there that she developed her interest in statistics with the encouragement of **Don Fraser**. Their collaboration continued throughout the 1980s and resulted in seven papers which often combined optimization and inference in classical regression contexts, but also on cylinders and spheres.

Hélène was hired at York University as an assistant professor of statistics in 1984. She was promoted to the rank of associate professor in 1988 and became a full professor in 1996. York was her academic home for the rest of her career, except for a leave without pay when she was on faculty at the University of Virginia from 1997 to 2001. Her sabbatical leaves also allowed her to travel extensively, notably to France, Italy, and Tunisia.

The year 1989 marked a turning point in Hélène's life. Her couple dissolved, though family life continued unwaveringly. Her research also took a new direction, as signposted by her solo paper in *JRSS-B* on an exact decomposition theorem for a sample from the trivariate hyperboloid distribution. She started investigating decomposition problems for various classes of exponential families, leading to her first publication in *The Annals of Statistics* in 1994. Over the years, she would publish a dozen papers in that premier journal.

Gradually, Hélène turned her attention to the structural properties of the rich class of Wishart distributions and various inferential issues related to the use of this class of models in practice. A sizeable portion of her research was devoted to this topic. Her main collaborator, **Gérard Letac**, cosigned over 20 papers with her on related themes and ultimately became her soulmate.

With her collaborators, Hélène proved a Craig-Sakamoto theorem and studied various aspects of Wishart distributions on symmetric cones. She looked into quadratic and inverse regression for Wishart models, characterized the normal-Wishart law, derived the moments of the complex Wishart, and addressed the even more delicate case of the real analog. She also investigated the existence of a noncentral Wishart distribution for a continuous shape parameter, designed efficient simulation schemes for the hyper-inverse Wishart and the G-Wishart, and much more.

Hélène's knowledge on Wishart-type distributions eventually led her to contribute to their use in graphical models. She designed Wishart distributions for decomposable graphs, conjugate priors for non-decomposable graphs, reference priors for discrete decomposable graphical models, and so on. She also looked into covariance estimation and various tests for different classes of graphical models.

In 2008, Hélène was named a fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics for her contributions to Wishart distributions and graphical models. In subsequent years, she also made numerous contributions to the theory of, and inference for, discrete hierarchical models, looked into high-dimensional issues for this class of models, and used her vast expertise of graphical models in applications, notably in genomics. She was frequently invited to speak at conferences and gave series of lectures in Sfax, Tunisia, and Pau, France. She remained very active until the end and at the time of her passing, she had 64 refereed articles and three book chapters in print; four papers were under review and more work was underway.

Over the years, Hélène supervised six MSc students, 10 PhD students, and seven postdoctoral fellows. She was appreciated and respected as an outstanding supervisor who devoted herself to helping her students achieve high expectations. She also mentored many young colleagues and played an active part in the creation of York's doctoral program in statistics and statistical consulting unit. She served the community at large through the organization of workshops and research programs at the Fields Institute, SAMSI, and CANSSI, among others. She was a member of the founding editorial board of the journal *Bayesian Analysis* (2004–09), and an associate editor for the *Journal of Multivariate Analysis* (2010–13) and *The Annals of Statistics* (2015–19).

Quiet and reserved by nature, Hélène was strong and resilient in the face of adversity. She was a woman of culture who enjoyed literature, classical music, and the opera. She was also a mountain hiking enthusiast. Over the years, she had reached a state of inner peace and departed serenely. She left behind her beloved children Alexandra (Martin Choquette) and Laurent (Joanna Swinburne), her grandchildren Katherine and Mathieu Choquette, Alexa, Elise and Luc Massam, her companion Gérard as well as many friends and colleagues. She will be greatly missed.

By **Christian Genest** (McGill University) and **Xin Gao** (York University)