



NORTH DAKOTA  
STATE UNIVERSITY

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- 2008-2009 Graduating Students
- Statistics Scholarship recipients
- Faculty/Staff of the department
- A Few of Our Current Graduate Students
- Where are some of our graduates now?

FACULTY &  
STAFF

Dr. Rhonda Magel

Dr. Fu-Chih Cheng

Mr. Ron Degges

Dr. Seung Won Hyun

Dr. Volodymyr Melnykov

Mrs. Tatjana Miljkovic

Dr. Gang Shen

Dawn Halle

# 2008-2009 Graduating Students

## Bachelor of Science-Behavioral Statistics

Matthew Pluim

## Bachelor of Science-Statistics

Lindsay Harris

Casey Jones

Zachary Sundheim

## Bachelor of Science-Mathematics & Statistics

Emily Erickson

Shane Loeffler

Jay Miller

Monica Peterson

## Graduate Certificate in Statistics

Keembiyage Somaratna

## Master of Science-Applied Statistics

Dongmei Shi

Xianzhe Chen

Geoffrey Childress

Cheng Jiang

Hui Zhao

## Ph.D.-Statistics

John Reber

Koji Fujiwara

Jia Guo



# HP Kuang Scholarship

The recipients of the Department of Statistics' HP Kuang Scholarship for academic year 2008-2009 were Travis Dockter and Lindsay Harris. Elizabeth Wegleitner received the HP Kuang Scholarship for the 2009-2010 academic year. Congratulations to all awardees!!

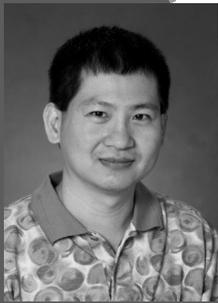
Recipients are selected by a committee in the department based on their statistics courses they have taken and GPA at NDSU.



**Dr. Rhonda Magel**  
Department Chair

*“When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.”*

—Helen Keller



**Dr. Fu-Chih Cheng**  
Assistant Professor



**Mr. Ron Degges**  
Senior Lecturer

## Dr. Rhonda Magel, Department Chair

Welcome to another addition of the Newsletter of the Department of Statistics at North Dakota State University. There have been many changes in our Department this year. To begin with, we have welcomed three new faculty members, Dr. Volodymyr Melnykov, Dr. Gang Shen, and Dr. Seung Won Hyun. They have each written a little about themselves in this newsletter. We have also introduced two new classes in survival and risk analysis that should be of interest to those students considering careers in either biostatistics or actuarial science. The first of these courses is being offered currently by Tatjana Miljkovic. The Department is planning to offer a second course in this area in Fall 2010. Ron Degges developed, and is now teaching, a web-based version of Stat 331, Regression Analysis. Fu-Chih Cheng is currently developing a web-based course for Stat 726, Applied Regression and Analysis of Variance. We currently also have web-based versions of Stat 330, Introductory Statistics, and Stat 725, Applied Statistics.

The Department of Statistics truly has graduates working coast to coast. We have had graduates working for the past several years in the east near the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania/ Wilmington, Delaware area. Mike Burak, an M.S. graduate of the Department, has just recently accepted a job in the San Diego, California area and hence, we now have graduates working coast to coast. Of course, there are still many of our graduates with jobs around the Fargo/ Moorhead area.

The Department wishes to say congratulations to all of our graduating students during this past year (with B.S., M.S., or Ph.D. degrees in addition to Graduate Certificates). A list of our graduates is given in this newsletter. We also have many proposal orals for current Ph.D. students and many final defenses for M.S. students coming up soon.

In addition to our graduates, the Department would also like to say congratulations to those undergraduate students receiving

awards during this past year including Travis Dockter, Lindsay Harris, and Elizabeth Wegleitner. Good luck to all of you in your future plans.

We would also love to hear from any of our past graduates about what you are doing at this point. Write when you can, or if you are in the area, stop by and see us. The Department of Statistics was planning on a move to Morrill Hall during this academic year, but unfortunately with the collapse of a portion of Minard Hall, our move has been delayed. You can find us in our same space for the remainder of this academic year and next.

I am still conducting research in the area of nonparametric statistics and have many graduate students also working in this area. On a personal note, I got to run in two full marathons last year and three half-marathons. My family has also just acquired its first puppy (after years of only having cats). It has been a real experience so far.

## Dr. Fu-Chih Cheng, Assistant Professor

Currently, I am working with a plant pathologist in applying differential equations and fuzzy logic to model leaf wetness duration. I also collaborated with two researchers from the department of education

in proposing a meta-analysis study to compare different online instruction methods. The proposal is currently under review at the U.S. Department of Education.

On February 18, I was invited by RAs at Thompson Hall to make Sushi with students. This is a part of Living & Learning Program sponsored by the department of residence life at NDSU.

## Mr. Ron Degges, Senior Lecturer

I received a BSE in Math Education from the University of Arkansas in 1983. Then I taught at a few public schools and then received a MSE in Math Education from the University of Central Arkansas in 1992. I then entered the Masters Program at NDSU in the Fall of 1992 and

finished my MS in Statistics in May of 1995. I was then hired to be a Lecturer in the department of Statistics starting the Fall of 1995. During my time here at NDSU I have been working on a PHD in Statistics. Over the last two years I have been involved in setting up an online class for STAT 725 and

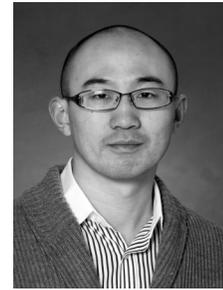
have taught it summer of 2009 as well as fall 2008 and fall 2009. I have also taken over the STAT 330 online course and have made a few changes there. In 2009 I started developing an online class for STAT 331 and this spring 2010 I am teaching it for the first time.

## Dr. Seung Won Hyun, Assistant Professor

I just started work in January 2010 in the Department of Statistics at NDSU. This place is very special to me. I took two statistics courses from here about 5 years ago and I found my dream to be a professor in statistics. Here I am 5 years from that time and my dream has come

true. I came back here where I developed my dream to be an assistant professor. I am very happy to have this position and thank God for this wonderful life here. I am teaching Intro Statistics (Stat 330) and Applied Regression (Stat 726) and working on my research

(Optimal designs) for this semester. If you are interested in my research area, you are always welcome to ask me any questions. I am so glad to work with you guys and I wish to have a good relationship with you all.



**Dr. Seung Won Hyun**  
Assistant Professor

## Dr. Volodymyr Melnykov, Assistant Professor

I am originally from Kharkiv which is the second largest city in Ukraine.

Upon the completion of my BS in applied mathematics, I taught introductory computer science classes for three years. After moving to the US, I entered a Masters program in applied statistics at Bowling Green State University. In my thesis, I developed a Bayesian model for predicting a winner in multicandi-

date US Presidential races. In the year of 2005, I joined the Department of Statistics at Iowa State University. During the next four years I worked on developing cluster analysis techniques with the use of the EM algorithm and bootstrap. I became especially interested in finite mixture models and their applications. I had my defense in the summer of 2009 and joined the Depart-

ment of Statistics at North Dakota State University right after the defense.

I like to spend time traveling and occasionally playing chess. In August, I am going to Vancouver to participate in the Joint Statistical Meeting.



**Dr. Volodymyr Melnykov**  
Assistant Professor

## Mrs. Tatjana Miljkovic, Lecturer

In the past year, I taught a variety of different classes from introductory statistics (STAT330) and regression analysis (STAT331) to experimental design (STAT462/662) and probability (STAT367). This semester, I am teach-

ing survival and risk analysis. This course was approved for the first time last year and covers the fundamental concepts in actuarial science. In addition to teaching, I was working on two financial mod-

eling projects funded by the state. In my free time, I enjoy being a mentor at Thompson Hall and serving on the board of NDSU Women's Club.



**Mrs. Tatjana Miljkovic**  
Lecturer

## Dr. Gang Shen, Assistant Professor

I am excited to become a new faculty member in the Department of Statistics, NDSU. This is really a new start in my academic career after years of graduate student life. I completed my MS in applied statistics in 2004 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and Ph.D. in statistics in 2009 at Purdue University. In 2008, I also earned my MS in statistics with focus on computational finance from Purdue.

I like being a statistician, because, statistics as a tool of modeling and making inference of real data, not only helps professionals from other disciplines better understand their research subjects, but also imposes many challenges back to statisticians themselves, in consideration of the diversity and complexity of real problems and data. I'm looking forward to the opportunity in sharing my expertise with other members in the

department, and the opportunity of inter-disciplinary cooperations. I hope to be a valuable resource to the NDSU community. My teaching for Spring 2010 includes introductory statistics and introduction to experiment design.

My door is always open, I'm looking forward to meeting and speaking with you.



**Dr. Gang Shen**  
Assistant Professor

## Dawn Halle, Academic Assistant

Another year has passed by at a fast speed. My 2 year anniversary in the Statistics Department is in July. It surely doesn't seem that I have been here that long. Everything is starting to become more and more familiar in the department. I have attended many forms of training around campus to keep up with the growing university.

My family has adjusted well to Fargo. We have settled in and have had time to travel and take a vacation this past year. We rang in the New Year in 2009 in Orlando FL at Walt Disney World. In addition to working this past summer, I kept busy traveling and attending events with my family. We made it to several Twins and Redhawks games. We also fit in some car races at the RRV speedway

and the RRV Fair in our summer schedule.

My oldest, Parish (12), started middle school (6th grade) at Discovery this school year. Savanna (10) is in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Bennett Elementary and Isaac (5) started Kindergarten at Bennett too.

I hope everyone has a great year!!



**Dawn Halle**  
Academic Assistant

“Success is getting  
and achieving what  
you want.  
Happiness is  
wanting and being  
content with what  
you get.” —  
Bernard Meltzer

## A Few of Our Current Graduate Students

**Kyal Brandt**: Kyal is from Rock Lake, ND. He is interested in meta-analysis and plans to graduate with a M.S. in Applied Statistics in May 2010. His advisor is Fu-Chih Cheng. Kyal enjoys wakeboarding, baseball, Basketball, poker hunting, fishing, teaching and coaching.

**Kishor Devkota**: Kishor is from Chitwan, Nepal. He is working on his M.S. in Statistics and expects to graduate in 2011.

**Shane Loeffler**: Shane is from Thief River Falls, MN. He is interested in regression and plans to graduate in December 2010 with an M.S. in Applied Statistics.

**Yanchun Zhao**: Yanchun is from China. She is interested in nonparametric tests and plans to graduate Fall 2010 with a M.S. in Applied Statistics. Her advisor is Rhonda Magel.

**Jyothsnadevi Pothana**: Jyothsnadevi is from India. She plans on graduating with an M.S. in Applied Statistics in Summer 2010. Her advisor is Rhonda Magel.

**Anuradha Boddeda**: Anuradha is from India. She is interested in the biostatistics area. She plans on graduating with a M.S. in Summer 2011. Rhonda Magel is her advisor.

**Arundhati Ghosh**: Arundhati is from India. She is working on her M.S. degree with the help from her advisor Fu-Chih Cheng.



## Where are some of our graduates now?

**Li Cao**: Li is a recent M.S. degree graduate from our department. She is currently working at the Neuropsychiatric Research Institute in Fargo.

**Martha Nelson**: Martha just finished up her requirements for her M.S. in December. She is now working at MSUM in the math department.

**Koji Fujiwara**: Koji received a Ph.D. this past year. He is currently working at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

**Nick Schauer**: Nick is currently the National Wheat Statistician for the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC. He and his wife, Susan, have a 1 year old son named Jack.

**Erik Inman**: Erik went to Chicago to work for the Census Bureau as a survey statistician after he graduated. Then he moved to Rochester, MN in late '02 to work at the Mayo Clinic as a Data Management Specialist/Analyst and has been there for over 7 years. He will be completing SAS training in November. He and his girlfriend, Desiree, have a 2 year old son named Miles. Erik's current hobbies include home-brewing, golfing, going to see live music and plays, and also trying to keep up with his son.

# DONATIONS

*The Department of Statistics wishes to thank all donors who have contributed to our scholarship programs and to the department. You are making a significant difference in the lives of our students and to North Dakota State University.*

✂

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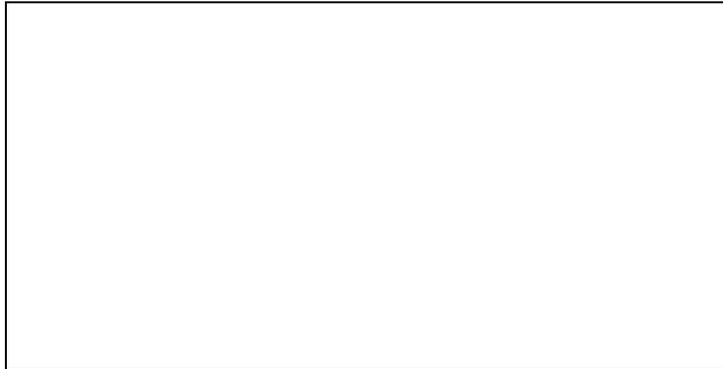
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