

# XXIX International Biometric Conference (IBC2018)

## Post Conference Review

### Organizing President Report from the IBC 2018 in Barcelona, Spain

We welcomed over 900 registrants from 62 countries to the very successful XXIXth International Biometric Conference, which was held in Barcelona, Spain, and hosted by the Spanish Region (REsp). For the excellent local arrangements, our thanks go to REsp, to its President Klaus Langohr, to the co-chairs of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) Pere Puig and Lupe Gomez Melis, to all the LOC members, and to the wonderful energetic and enthusiastic StudentVolunteers. For the scientific program, very special thanks go to Charmaine Dean (WNAR) the chair of the International Program Committee (IPC) and to all the IPC members. For the Short Courses and Statistics-in-Practice sessions, we thank the members of the Education Committee chaired earlier by Pascale Tubert-Bitter (RF) and then by Annette Kopp-Schneider (DR). As in 2016, IBO was responsible for overall organization of the web site, abstract submission and review system, registration, and the very successful mobile app. Thanks go to IBO staff members and to members of Grupo Pacifico, the local management company.

sadors from Bangladesh and from Nigeria. This was truly a joint meeting of all the Regions of the IBS.

We had record numbers at almost every stage. There were 18 *Short Course* applications, five were selected and offered, and attracted a total of 188 registrants. There were 72 *Invited Session* proposals, and 18 were selected. Additionally there were six *Showcase* sessions, including *Biometrics* and *JABES* showcases featuring selected best papers from 2016 and 2017, an *ISI Invited Session*, a *Host Region Invited Session*, and a *Statistics in Practice* session, kindly sponsored by Wiley. There were 878 *Contributed Paper* abstracts submitted; initially these resulted in 326 Oral acceptances and 456 Poster acceptances. Eventually, we had 285 *Contributed Oral* talks in 53 *Contributed Sessions*, and 278 *Posters* split between two 2-day *Poster Sessions*. In the conference competitions, 47 *Young Statisticians* submitted their papers in January, while 35 student members later completed submissions for the *Best Student Oral* competition. A total of 94 posters were submitted in the *Best Poster* competition. Thank you to everyone who proposed, organized, or chaired Sessions, to all who submitted abstracts, and to all the participants who travelled to Barcelona and presented their research either orally or as a poster.

The Barcelona International Convention Centre provided an excellent venue for the meeting, with plenty of space for the full program of talks, posters and IBS governance meetings. Days started early and ended late, allowing for record numbers of sessions, while keeping to no more than 2 invited/showcase sessions and 3 contributed sessions in parallel. The provision of bag lunches meant that people remained on site, and enjoyed either one of the lunch-time meetings, or could sit in a large hall with an outside balcony and wonderful view over the Mediterranean. Our meeting was also well sponsored: sponsors included four publishers (Wiley, Springer, CRC, and OUP), and also (thanks again to the LOC) a large number of local Spanish Universities, Institutes, Societies, and Companies. A very special initiative due to Lupe Gomez Melis was the naming of the session rooms for 6 distinguished deceased women in Biometry from 6 countries around the world. The wonderful posters produced by Lupe and her enthusiastic student helpers taught us all more about Susie Bayarri, Gertrude Cox, Aleyamma George, Florence Nightingale, Laura Pla, and Helen Newton Turner, and gave us a deeper appreciation of their contributions to our discipline.

On the Monday and Tuesday there was a focus on welcoming IBS Young Statisticians (YS); broadly those within three years of their last degree. The now traditional Monday YS lunch was hugely successful, with the *Kahoots* game proving a true ice-breaker. Special thanks for the lunch activities to Isabel Serra (REsp) and Alex Sanchez (REsp). Lunch was followed by the *Statistics in Practice* sessions, well-attended by delegates of all ages, and the Monday evening *Welcome Reception* (moved from the traditional Sunday) was enjoyed by all. On Tuesday afternoon, the YS Showcase session



Special thanks also goes to all who participated in organizing showcase sessions or awards programs, especially to the Awards Fund Committee, chaired by Dan Kajunga (UGDA), to the members of Representative Council led by Pam Shaw (ENAR) who reviewed the Young Statistician submissions, to Freedom Gumedze (GSAF) and Jane Hutton (BIR) who were the IBS partners in the joint ISI/IBS Committee to review ISI applicants in the Young Ambassadors competition, and to all the IPC and LOC members who, led by Jeannine Houwing-Duistermaat (ANed) and Monteserrat Rue (REsp), participated in judging the Best Student Oral and Best Poster competitions at IBC. We welcomed 15 travel grant awardees from Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, Brazil, Georgia, India and Pakistan; five Young Statistician competition winners from Ethiopia, USA, Brazil, Australia, and UK; and two ISI Young Ambassadors

was followed by the Awards Ceremony at which the YS Showcase speakers were recognized, and later that evening the Young Statisticians Mixer at the BOO restaurant at the beach was another memorable event.

Also at the Tuesday Awards Ceremony, retiring editors of IBS journals were recognized and thanked for their contributions. Marie Davidian (ENAR) completed 12 years of service as *Biometrics* Executive Editor, and Mike Daniels (ENAR) and Stijn Vansteelandt (RBe) have completed or are completing their terms as *Biometrics* Co-Editors. Also completing their terms of service in 2018, we recognized Donna Pauler Ankerst (DR) the outgoing *Biometrics* Book Review Editor, Stephen Buckland (BIR) the outgoing *JABES* Editor, and Havi Murad (EMR) the Editor of the *Biometric Bulletin*. The winners of the *Biometrics* and *JABES* Best Paper competitions for 2016 and 2017 were also recognized, and congratulated on their papers and on their Showcase presentations. Then came the highlight of the ceremony. The *IBS Rob Kempton Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Biometry in the Developing World* was made to Jim Todd (TNZ), and (also a new record number) four *IBS Honorary Life Memberships* were conferred on Marie Davidian (ENAR), Hans van Houwelingen (ANed), Martin Schumacher (DR), and Alan Welsh (AR).

Many other social, scientific and administrative events showed the active and enthusiastic participation of IBS members. The Tuesday lunch-time General Meeting of the society attracted the required quorum of regular members, allowing a small bylaw amendment to be passed. The Thursday lunch meeting organized by the Committee of Women in Statistics (CWS) and led by Shili Lin (ENAR) was very well attended, and we hope may become a regular IBC event. The traditional Wednesday tours, organized by Grupo Pacifico but led also by local IBC participants, were enjoyed by many, as also was the Thursday Gala Dinner, which took place in the magnificently restored medieval gothic Royal Shipyard building, Drassanes Reials de Barcelona. Finally, the Friday Closing Ceremony saw the awards to winners of the conference Best Student Oral and Best Poster competitions (listed below), more thanks and recognitions to others, and in closing a preview to the XXXth International Biometric Conference, which will take place in Seoul, Korea, 5-10 July 2020.

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## Young Statisticians of All Ages Joined Us at IBC 2018

By Peter Doherty

With a welcoming atmosphere, a superb lineup of talks, and with the weather being so cooperative, IBC2018 became an ideal setting for young statisticians to get to know their peers from around the world, exchange ideas, meet with mentors and learn from experienced presenters, all while taking in one of the most beautiful settings in Europe. All of these factors contributed to a highly successful biennial conference for young statisticians.

Louise Ryan's President's Message has already mentioned some of the noteworthy events, such as the Young Statisticians lunch and ice-breaker, the Monday evening Welcome Reception, the

Young Statisticians Showcase session and Awards Ceremony, and the extremely popular Young Statisticians Mixer. Of course, the extraordinary support received from our Local Organizing Committee and our local Co-chairs, Lupe Gomez and Pere Puig, were critical to our success. Special praise should also be extended to the organizers of the Young Statisticians Program, especially Isabel Serra and Alex Sanchez, both of the Spanish Region.

As is tradition, we took a break from scientific sessions on Wednesday. Young statisticians were on the move that day, taking advantage of a few hours of freedom by enjoying the beauty of Barcelona and the surrounding region. The rest of the conference featured a wide variety of topics and new insights, with Thursday evening's Gala Dinner once again proving to be a high point of the conference for many of our young participants.

We estimate that one third of our IBC2018 attendees are currently studying at the Undergraduate or Graduate level. For young professionals at the start of their career, a large international conference can be a career-changing experience. IBS leaders welcome the opportunity to show our newest participants just how important they are to the future of this Society and our profession. This attitude was on display throughout the conference. We also hope that young statisticians, no matter their chronological age, are comfortable with and appreciate the importance that the IBS places on creating a culture of openness, engaged learning, and diversity in all its forms.

On behalf of the Executive Board and our headquarters team in Washington, DC, thank you all for joining us. We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas for making the next IBC even more useful and fun for young professionals.

## Awards and Honors during the IBC2018

The Rob Kempton Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Development of Biometry in the Developing World was bestowed upon Jim Todd, of the Tanzanian Region. Supported by the British and Irish Region, the Uganda Region and the IBS Sub Sahara Network (SUSAN). Jim is known for his passion for teaching and education and for his contributions towards biostatistics training in Tanzania, East Africa and the Sub-Saharan African countries.



Jim Todd receiving The Rob Kempton Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Development of Biometry in the Developing World.