



NEW ENGLAND STATISTICAL SOCIETY (NESS)

*To promote the growth and expansion of
statistical science in New England and beyond.*

<https://nestat.org>

NESS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025

IN BRIEF

Announcements

❖ Call for participation in the 39th NESS Symposium

The Department of Statistics at the University of Connecticut is proud to host the 39th NESS symposium on May 27–30, 2026. Please contact the organizing chairs Dr. HaiYing Wang (haiying.wang@uconn.edu) and Dr. Yao Zheng (yao.zheng@uconn.edu) for inquiries, or visit the official conference website <https://symposium.nestat.org> for more details.

❖ Call for nominations of Chernoff Excellence in Statistics Award

At A Glance: NESS Activities in 2025

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NESS Officers

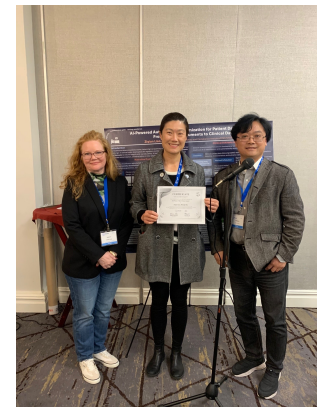
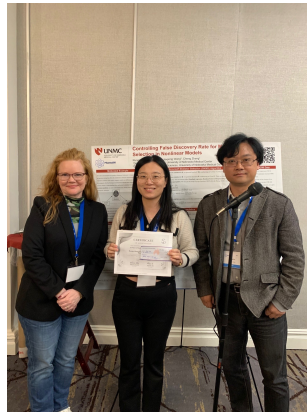
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Updates from the Committee on Conferences

This year was packed with exciting conferences supported by NESS! From cutting-edge discussions on pharmaceutical data science, rare disease research and data science in society, our conferences brought together experts, students, and industry leaders to share ideas and spark collaborations. Here is a look back at the highlights from 2025 and a glimpse of what is coming next.

The 2025 Pharmaceutical Data Science Conference

The second annual Pharmaceutical Data Science Conference (PharmaDS 2025) took place April 7–9, at the Crowne Plaza in Edison, NJ. Participants explored how data science and AI are transforming every stage of pharmaceutical development. The event kicked off with short courses on deep learning, generative AI, and biomedical language models, followed by two full days of sessions led by experts from industry and academia. Attendees enjoyed inspiring talks, hands-on tutorials, and plenty of networking that sparked new collaborations. A big shout-out to our co-chairs, Rebecca Jones-Taha and Philip He, for making this event such a success.



PharmaDS 2025 Poster Awards

PharmaDS will be back March 23–25, 2026, at the Crowne Plaza in Edison, NJ, featuring a wide-ranging program that highlights applied AI, methodological innovation in data science, and cross-industry collaboration in pharmaceutical development. The agenda will again include short courses led by industry leaders, providing deep, practical insights and hands on exercises, for cutting-edge topics shaping the future of drug development.

The 38th New England Statistics Symposium

We had a fantastic 38th New England Statistics Symposium (NESS 2025) on June 2–3 at the Omni New Haven Hotel at Yale! Short-courses were held on May 31–June 1 followed by two full days of excellent scientific program. Highlights included keynote talks by John Lafferty, Heping Zhang, Nancy Zhang, and Michael Lopez, an engaging plenary panel on Women in Statistics, a fun statathon, and a student poster session. We also celebrated outstanding contributions with the Chernoff Award (congrats to Alan E. Gelfand!), student research and poster awards, and recognized our NextGen scholarship recipients. Huge thanks to co-chairs Shuangge (Steven) Ma and Yihong Wu, along with all organizers, speakers, volunteers, and student award judges for making this awesome event.



NESS 2025 Symposium Participants



NESS 2025 Symposium Student Awards



NESS 2025 Symposium Chernoff Award



NESS 2025 Symposium Sessions

The 8th New England Rare Disease Statistics Workshop

The 8th Annual New England Rare Disease Statistics (NERDS) Workshop on October 9–10 at the Hyatt Regency Boston/Cambridge was a big success! With the theme *Shaping Tomorrow: Transforming Rare Disease Drug Development*, experts from academia, industry, and regulatory agencies came together for two days of engaging talks, panels, and interactive workshops. Attendees discussed innovative trial designs, regulatory perspectives, and shared ideas to advance rare disease research. Thank you to our co-chairs Ran Duan and Ying Zhou for their leadership and hard work in making this event so impactful.



NERDS Workshop Participants

The 2025 NextGen Data Science Day Conference

We wrapped up the year with an amazing Data Science Day 2025 on November 8, co-hosted by New England Statistical Society NextGen and Brandeis University. The theme *Data and AI in Society* sparked great conversations and learning throughout the day for students. The keynote speakers Jin Zhao (Brandeis University) and Yoohyun Jung (Boston Globe) shared inspiring insights, and the panels on careers and real-world applications were a big hit. Students impressed with creative posters, and the networking sessions were buzzing with energy! A huge thank you to Zhan (Harold) Ye and the NextGen committee for making this event possible.

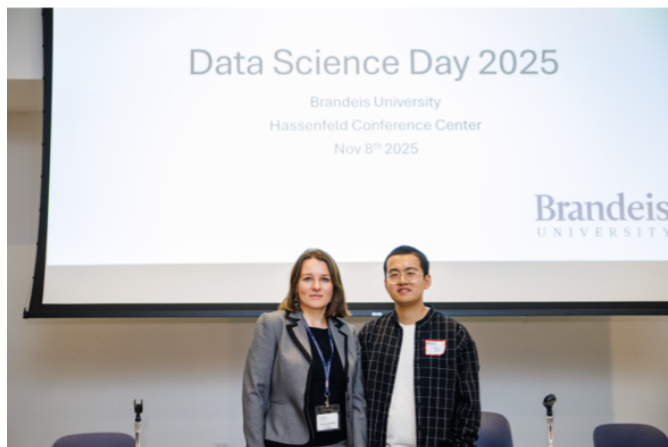
➡ Contributed by Shariq Mohammed (Assistant Professor of Biostatistics at Boston University); Edited by Yuwen Gu.

DSD 2025 Summary

Our recent event was a resounding success, drawing an impressive turnout of approximately 90 in-person participants. Attendees included a vibrant mix of industry professionals, academics, and students representing 15 schools across New England. This diversity created an engaging environment that fostered collaboration and knowledge sharing throughout the day.

The keynote sessions were a highlight, offering thought-provoking insights into pressing topics. The morning keynote explored the shift from traditional word-count methods to advanced AI-driven approaches that interpret meaning, context, and causality. Attendees learned about pipelines incorporating large language models (LLMs), fine-tuning techniques, and reasoning for explainable text analysis. In the afternoon, the focus turned to the growing threat of federal data loss and its implications for journalism and public decision-making, emphasizing the critical role of data scientists in safeguarding data integrity. Both sessions featured dynamic audience interactions that enriched the discussions.

Expert panels provided real-world perspectives on a wide range of topics, from data science applications in biotech startups and consulting to strategies for innovation and career transitions from academia to industry. Panelists also examined the creative potential of LLMs and their usefulness in research, while cautioning against over-reliance on these tools. The conversations underscored the importance of aligning technology with individual goals and priorities, offering attendees practical insights for navigating the evolving data landscape.



DSD 2025 Participants

Student contributions were celebrated through a record-breaking poster session featuring 14 high-quality projects. These posters showcased work spanning foundational statistical models to advanced applications of LLMs in real-world contexts. The session concluded with recognition of four exceptional winners—representing both undergraduate and graduate levels—each awarded a \$150 cash prize for their outstanding research and analysis.



DSD 2025 Photo Gallery

The event concluded with a lively networking session designed to maximize engagement. Two dedicated rooms ensured students had ample opportunity to connect with keynote speakers and panelists, ask questions, and receive career advice. Professionals also engaged in meaningful exchanges, creating a dynamic environment that fostered collaboration and strengthened connections across the data science community.

➡ Contributed by Zhan (Harold) Ye (Director at Pfizer); Edited by Yuwen Gu.

Updates from the Committee on Journal & Publication

The Journal and Publication Committee continued its focus on the publications and manuscript reviews of the NESS's flagship journal, the New England Journal of Statistics in Data Science (NEJSDS). We have published 10 articles in Volume 3, Issue 1, in 2025. Main topics of these articles include shape-restricted splines, clinical trials for oncology drugs, Bayesian inference under survival models, power analysis for experimental design, machine learning, among others. Example articles of this issue include "Heteroscedastic Growth Curve Modeling with Shape-Restricted Splines" by Jieying Jiao, Wenling Song, Yishu Xue and Jun Yan, "Considerations for Single-Arm Trials to Support Accelerated Approval of Oncology Drugs" by Feinan Lu, Tao Wang, Ying Lu and Jie Chen, "Bayesian Inference of A Unified Estimand under Survival Models with Cure Fraction" by Hongfei Li, Qian H. Li and Ming-Hui Chen, "PDXpower: A Power Analysis Tool for Experimental Design in Pre-clinical Xenograft Studies for Uncensored and Censored Outcomes" by Shanpeng Li, Donatello Telesca, Harley I. Kornblum, et al., and "Contrastive Inverse Regression for Dimension Reduction" by Sam Hawke, Yuen Ma, Hengrui Luo and Didong Li. Issue 2 of Volume 3 contains 8 papers on topics ranging from machine learning, clinical trial designs and Bayesian analysis. This issue is scheduled to appear online in December 2025. The special issue "Dose Finding and Related Topics in Drug Developments" also has 8 accepted papers with topics ranging from two-stage designs in oncology trials, dose-finding designs and methods to Bayesian estimation and interim efficacy monitoring. We expect this issue to appear online soon. The "to appear" category in the journal website has 13 articles that have been officially accepted by the editors. Interested readers can find these articles from the NESS website <https://journal.nestat.org>.

The Journal and Publication Committee is actively seeking topics and proposals for special issues as well as regular submitted manuscripts. We currently have two special issues “Pushing the Boundary of Data Science through Statistical Modeling and Inference” and “Clinical Trial Designs Involving Multiple Stages and Re-Randomization Beyond Traditional Randomization” at the review stage and two active special issue calls for manuscripts on “Data Science and AI in Pharma” and “Rare Disease Statistics”. The committee encourages NESS members and friends to submit your manuscripts to NEJSDS. You may submit your manuscripts to these special issues, or through regular submissions if the topics of your article do not fit into any of the special issue topics. As a unique feature, the NEJSDS has two tracks for review: the traditional review process (Track I) and the review process with authors’ involvement (Track II). The journal welcomes innovative research contributions on applications, methods, timely reviews, commentary and editorials as well as software tutorials and reviews. If your article is on an advanced state-of-the-art research topic which is new to the general statistical community, you may suggest Track II review to the editors or session editors in which you can solicit review reports or scientific feedbacks of your article and share the reports with the NEJSDS editorial board.

Finally, as 2025 draws to a close, the committee would like to express its sincere appreciation for the tremendous time and efforts of the contributing authors, reviewers, associate editors, section editors, special issue guest editors, Editor-in-Chiefs and members of the Office of Editor-in-Chief. We would like to see more cutting-edge research and other articles published in NEJSDS. We hope that through our collective effort we can enhance the reputation and standing of our journal in the statistical community. Your support and encouragement will play a critical role in the success of the journal.

➡ Contributed by Colin Wu (Mathematical Statistician at the National Institutes of Health and Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University); Edited by Yuwen Gu.

Updates from the Committee on Education

The New England Statistical Society Scholarships for Underrepresented Minorities will advance the representation of underrepresented groups in statistics and data science by supporting graduating high school seniors and first/second-year undergraduate students interested in pursuing a career in a data science-related field (e.g., statistics, quantitative fields in social science, math, engineering, and computer science). The scholarships will support the efforts of NESS to improve the diversity and inclusivity of its community, as well as in the fields of statistics and data science.

Application are due May 8, 2026.

Donations in support of scholarships are greatly appreciated.

➡ Contributed by Alex Young (Undergraduate Advisor and Lecturer at Harvard Statistics); Edited by Yuwen Gu.

Announcements

Call for Nominations of the Chernoff Excellence in Statistics Award

The New England Statistical Society (NESS, <https://nestat.org/>) welcomes nominations for the 2026 Chernoff Excellence in Statistics Award. NESS created this award to commemorate Herman Chernoff’s outstanding, long-term contributions to the field of statistics. These contributions include work on large sample theory, experimental design, sequential analysis, methods of presenting statistical data in visual form, and statistical decision making.

The Chernoff Excellence in Statistics Awards is the most prestigious award bestowed by the NESS, given to an individual who, in the tradition of Herman Chernoff’s work, has made exceptional contributions to the theory, methodology, or novel applications to statistics, biostatistics and/or data science. The award will be awarded to one recipient every year at the New England Statistics Symposium, with travel expenses covered plus a minimum \$500 honorarium. The 2025 award recipient was Alan E. Gelfand, Professor Emeritus, Duke University.

Nominees who previously did not win will remain under consideration for the next three years, and if they choose to do so, may update their submission.

Please submit nominations for the award by **January 15, 2026**. To nominate an individual for the Chernoff Excellence in Statistics Award:

- ✧ Fill out the nomination form at <https://forms.gle/GX26mHQqxWWo2hLN9>;
- ✧ Upload the candidate’s CV in the form;
- ✧ Email these documents to hcaward@nestat.org.

Please share this call for nominations widely. We welcome nominations for contributions from careers that span government, non-profit organizations, industry, as well as academia.

Learn more about the Chernoff Excellence in Statistics Award and past recipients at <https://nestat.org/hcaward/>.

Other Sponsored Events

The 8th Annual Wesleyan QAC DataFest

NESS is a proud sponsor of this year's [DataFest](#) event. The DataFest 2025 ran from April 11–13 at Wesleyan University. DataFest is a data analysis competition held at Wesleyan University where students are presented with a large, complex, surprise data set and work over the weekend to explore, analyze, and present their findings. Teams of 3-5 students work together and compete against other teams. This year, teams from Wesleyan University, Yale University, Connecticut College, Trinity College, UConn, and Bentley University were invited. The event is part of a set of initiatives to strengthen quantitative reasoning and facilitate computational and data analysis work across the curriculum. It is designed to bring together current students, alumni and data analysis professionals as they work together in addressing real world problems that involve computational data work. The event also provides an opportunity for recruiters to connect with students interested and skilled in data analysis that may be candidates for internships and job openings.

The 23rd ASA-CT Mini-Conference

NESS is a proud sponsor of the [23rd ASA-CT Mini-Conference](#). The annual event is organized by the [Connecticut Chapter of the American Statistical Association](#) (ASA-CT), with the aim to

- ✧ engage current and prospective ASA members;
- ✧ discuss emerging topics in statistics and data science;
- ✧ provide a platform to connect statisticians and data scientists in the State of Connecticut and beyond and to promote statistics and data science to the next generation.

The conference ran on Friday, May 16, 2025 and was hybrid, with in-person sessions held at 47 College Street, Room 106A/B, Yale University, CT and all sessions broadcast live via Zoom.

Interdisciplinary Seminars on Statistical Methodology for Social and Behavioral Research

The Interdisciplinary Seminars on Statistical Methodology for Social and Behavioral Research continued to be supported by the Department of Statistics and the Department of Education Psychology at the University of Connecticut (UConn), the Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute (SAMS) and the New England Statistical Society (NESS). In 2025, the seminar was held in hybrid mode with people joining both in person and online from around the world. The aims of the seminar are to promote the connection between the statistical, social and behavioral science communities and to encourage more graduate students to participate in interdisciplinary research.

The seminars in 2025 are listed below:

Date	Speaker	Affiliation	Title
01/27/2025	Walter Dempsey	University of Michigan	Challenges in Time-varying Causal Effect Moderation Analysis in Mobile Health
02/07/2025	Paul De Boeck	Ohio State University	Adventitious Error Everywhere
05/02/2025	Nidhi Kohli	University of Minnesota	Bayesian Longitudinal (Non)Linear Mediation Models
09/26/2025	Greg Hancock	University of Maryland	Power Analysis Has Lost Its Way: New Methods To Bring It Back Home
10/24/2024	Chuck Huber	STATA	Item Response Theory (IRT), Introduction to Bayesian Statistics, Bayesian IRT, & Machine Learning in Stata

For announcements and WebEx live streaming links, please visit <https://statistics.uconn.edu/events/interdisciplinary-seminars/>.

Leadership & The 2025 Election

Changes to the council and executive appointments since January 1, 2025 are listed as follows.

- ✧ Wenrui Li from the University of Connecticut has been appointed as a Society Council member.
- ✧ Jiafeng Sun from Travelers Insurance Companies has been appointed as a Society Council member.
- ✧ Joshua Warren from Yale University has been appointed as a Society Council member.
- ✧ Zhen (James) Xiao from Vertex Pharmaceuticals has been appointed as a Society Council member.
- ✧ Shan Xiao from Takeda Pharmaceuticals has been appointed as the Deputy Secretary.
- ✧ Yuanye (Vickie) Zhang from Servier has been appointed as the Treasurer.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank executives and council members who have concluded their terms for their great service to NESS and to the statistical and scientific communities:

- ✧ Xiaojing Wang from the University of Connecticut.

NESS Membership

NESS is offering 50% discount to K-12 educators. The current membership fee structure is as follows:

- ✧ Student membership: free
- ✧ Regular membership: \$30 per year
- ✧ Life membership: \$600
- ✧ K-12 educator: 50% discount on regular membership (\$15 per year) and life membership (\$300)
- ✧ Joint membership with the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS): \$109 per year

To become a NESS member, please register through our website at <https://nestat.org/php/member/#signup> or mail in the attached registration form.

To make a donation, please visit <https://nestat.org/donation/>. Your donation will help to promote the growth and expansion of statistical science in the New England area and beyond.

We sincerely invite you to join NESS. Without the support from devoted members, the establishment and the rapid growth of our young society would not have been possible.

Call for Contribution to the Newsletter

Members are invited to submit contributions to the NESS Newsletter which will be published subject to the approval of the editor. Contributions can be of any form relevant to the interests of the society. Please contact Yuwen Gu at yuwen.gu@uconn.edu.



NESS | New England Statistical Society

NEW ENGLAND STATISTICS SYMPOSIUM SINCE 1987 & NEW ENGLAND STATISTICAL SOCIETY SINCE 2017

Membership Registration Form

Last Name:	
First Name:	
Middle Name:	
Membership Type: Student <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Life <input type="checkbox"/> NESS/IMS <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 Educator <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Student Members, Expected Graduation Year:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	
Employer:	
Address Line 1:	
Address Line 2:	
County/City:	
State/Province:	
Zip Code:	
Country:	
Signature & Date:	

- *Student membership:* free
- *Regular membership:* \$30 per year
- *Life membership:* \$600
- *K-12 educator:* 50% discount on regular membership (\$15 per year) and life membership (\$300)
- *Joint membership with the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS):* \$109 per year

Please send the form and a check to:

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