

UCLA’s Onyebuchi Arah and the Karolinska Institutet’s Arvid Sjölander to Receive \$10,000 Causality in Statistics Education Award

ALEXANDRIA, VA (May 16, 2016) – Onyebuchi Arah, professor of epidemiology in the Fielding School of Public Health at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and Arvid Sjölander, associate professor at the Karolinska Institutet (KI) in Stockholm, Sweden, are the recipients of the 2016 [Causality in Statistics Education Award](#).

Established in 2013 by Judea Pearl, professor of computer science and statistics at UCLA, the annual award recognizes the work of an individual or team that enhances the teaching and learning of causal inference in introductory statistics coursework. Funded by Microsoft Research and Google, \$5,000 will be presented to each recipient at the [2016 Joint Statistical Meetings](#) (JSM 2016) this July in Chicago.

JSM 2016 is the largest gathering of statisticians and data scientists in the world.

“While the study and practice of statistics is growing in popularity and demand in both academia and professional occupations, there remains a glaring gap when it comes to causal inference. Even with the recent development of causal inference tools, which are currently sweeping new insights and application areas, most statistics educators and textbooks do not convey any material on these tools,” said Pearl, who is co-chair of the prize-selection committee. “In giving this award, we not only recognize the dynamic efforts of renowned scholars, but also show other researchers and scientists that teaching causal inference can be fun and formative.”

Arah is honored for his graduate-level course titled “[Logic, Causation, and Probability](#),” which embraces the current developments in causal inference using nonexperimental data and equips students with both theory and practical tools. The 10-week course features an introduction to principles of deductive logic; allows for substantial practice in identifying and estimating target quantities using directed acyclic graphs, probability logic and potential outcomes language; and employs as a teaching tool “hands-on” data analysis exercises.

Sjölander is being recognized for teaching a [one-week introductory course](#) for doctoral students in epidemiology on causal inference that covers fundamentals of causal inference, counterfactuals, causal diagrams, confounding, mediation and colliding and advanced estimation techniques such as inverse probability weighting and marginal structural models. He also conducts a one-day course in causal diagrams for medical doctors at KI’s Research School,

where students learn about problems with traditional covariate selection strategies, and how causal diagrams can be used to formulate better strategies.

JSM 2016 takes place July 30–August 4, 2016, at McCormick Place in Chicago. More than 6,000 statisticians and data scientists from across the globe representing academia, business and industry, as well as national, state and local governments, will attend more than 700 sessions while engaging in the exchange of ideas, networking and exploring opportunities in collaboration.

###

About the American Statistical Association

The ASA is the world's largest community of statisticians and the oldest continuously operating professional science society in the United States. Its members serve in industry, government and academia in more than 90 countries, advancing research and promoting sound statistical practice to inform public policy and improve human welfare. For additional information, please visit the ASA website at www.amstat.org.

For more information:

Jill Talley
Public Relations Manager, ASA
(703) 684-1221, Ext. 1865
jill@amstat.org