STUDENTS USE STATS TO HELP MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER IN THE POLICE DATA CHALLENGE

*The American Statistical Association Announces Winners for a Statistics Contest
in the Fight to Keep Communities Safe*

ALEXANDRIA, VA, December 6, 2017 – The American Statistical Association (ASA) today announced the winners for the Police Data Challenge (PDC), a contest for high-school and undergraduate students across North America, to demonstrate their statistical and data visualization skills with recommendations for enhanced public safety. The ASA teamed up with the Police Data Initiative, a Police Foundation initiative that promotes the use of open data to encourage joint problem solving, to provide students with data sets from the Baltimore, Cincinnati and Seattle police departments for analysis.

"On behalf of the American Statistical Association, congratulations to the Police Data Challenge winners for their impressive recommendations for improving safety through statistics," said Ron Wasserstein, the ASA's executive director. "The entries showed the immense level of passion students have nationwide for applying statistics to important initiatives, demonstrating that statistics is a powerful resource for change."

Each team submitted up to 10 PowerPoint slides to explain their methods, findings, analysis and recommendations in 500 or fewer words. The judges—made up of statisticians, academics and researchers—based their evaluation on the quality of the narrative and visualization, the analysis, and the recognition of any implicit biases. They also grouped their scores into three categories for overall presentation, visualization and use of external data.

The winners are:

Best Overall Winners

- Undergraduate: Jimmy Hickey, Kapil Khanal and Luke Peacock - Winona State University, Winona, Minn.
  Sponsored by Silas Bergen

- High School: Catalina Bartholomew, Sophie Mason, Grace Ding and Allie Restani - Valley Christian High School, San Jose, Calif.
  Sponsored by Claudia Smith

Best Visualization Winners

- Undergraduate: Julia Nguyen, Katherine Qian, Youbeen Shim and Catherine Sun - University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.
  Sponsored by Jordan Rodu
- High School: Alex Lapuente, Ana Kenefick and Sara Kenefick - Charlotte Latin School, Charlotte, N.C.
  Sponsored by Donna Minnig

Best Use of External Data Winners

- Undergraduate: Luke Zheng, Qianyu Liu, Scott Lai, Sicheng Chu and Xi He - University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
  Sponsored by Karl Rohe
- High School: Alaina Cerro, Sean Conroy and Elise Bermudez - Bethel Park High School, Bethel Park, Pa.
  Sponsored by Lee Cristofano

"The contestants' creativity, data analysis and application showed a level of statistical knowledge that inspired optimism among our judges for the future of statistics," said Jeri Mulrow, acting director at the Bureau of Justice Statistics and PDC judge. "Having so many eager high-school and undergraduate students participate demonstrates that the field of statistics is growing and influencing a wide range of sectors."

"The winners provided distinguished statistical methods to consider," said Jim Bueermann, Police Foundation president. "We look forward to assisting with coordination to help Best Overall winning teams share their submissions for innovative solutions to improve accountability between communities and law enforcement."

About the American Statistical Association

The ASA promotes the practice and profession of statistics. It is the world's largest community of statisticians and one of the oldest continuously operating professional science associations in the United States. Since its foundation, it has supported statistical science through meetings, publications, membership services, education, accreditation and advocacy. 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 http://www.amstat.org.

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