

March 26, 2019

## **DataFest coming to MacEwan**

Edmonton – The Department of Mathematics and Statistics at MacEwan University will host the 8th annual American Statistical Association (ASA) DataFest.

DataFest was founded at University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) in 2011, when 30 students gathered for 48 intense hours to analyze five years of arrest records. “MacEwan is hosting the first DataFest in Alberta and has collaborated with the University of Alberta in organizing the event,” says Karen Buro, chair, Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

“For 48 hours, DataFest brings together student teams – of up to five members – to extract knowledge from a complex real-world data set using their experience and skills in statistics, machine learning, computer science, and problem solving,” added Buro.

In 2016, TicketMaster asked DataFest participants to examine how site visits can be converted to ticket sales, and how can TicketMaster identify “true fans” of an artist or band? The data consisted of three sets. One included events from the last 12 months that tracked customer travel through the website. Another provided information about advertising campaigns on Google, and the third included data on the events themselves.

“It’s also an opportunity to find out how relevant, useful, and versatile the tools the students are learning in the classrooms are,” said Buro.

A total of 44 students from both institutions organized in nine teams will be competing for three awards: Best in Show; Best Visualization; and, Best Use of Outside Data. Judges from both universities, and two judges from the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) will review the team's findings.

The data to be analyzed will be released to the nine teams on Friday, March 29 and are asked not to disclose the details of the topic until May 7, when the last DataFest of 2019 will be completed at the University of Waterloo.

There is a total of 41 DataFest events happening at North American universities between March 22 and May 7, including three in Canada, and one at the University of Mannheim in Germany.

When: March 29 - 31

Where: 8 - 211 (Building 8, room 211)

## **About the American Statistical Association (ASA)**

The ASA is the world’s largest community of statisticians. Since it was founded in Boston in 1839, it has supported excellence in the development, application, and dissemination of statistical science through meetings, publications, education, accreditation, and advocacy.

*Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 65 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.*

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