A Tribute to Jessica Utts
Recipient of the 2021 George Cobb
Lifetime Achievement Award
from the
Statistics Education Community

CAL POLY

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March 3, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great enthusiasm that we write this letter nominating Jessica Utts for the George Cobb Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education. We believe that Jessica is eminently deserving of the honor. The description of the award—an individual who, over an extended period of time, has made lasting contributions with broad impact to the field of statistics education—describes Jessica perfectly, as she has been enormously influential in statistics education on both a national and international level.

Jessica's work in the statistics education community is second to none. She has written two best-selling textbooks for Introductory Statistics. *Seeing Through Statistics* was first published in 1996 and is now in its fourth edition. Using key examples, the text revolutionized how statistics instructors teach the intuitive side of statistics. The thought questions at the beginning of each chapter engage students with real life examples, including counterintuitive situations that leave the students wanting to understand the concepts more deeply. Even if they don't use the text in their own classrooms, many instructors use them to supplement other texts which follow a more formulaic structure. Her second book, *Mind on Statistics* (with Robert Heckard) bridges the gap between intuition and technical skills taught in a standard introductory course.

In a 2003 *American Statistician* article, Jessica wrote a call to arms for statisticians to rethink how they teach students to interpret statistical results. As the majority of students taking statistics go on to become causal observers of studies (and not practitioners themselves), the most important skills they can obtain are those related to understanding results. Over the last 25 years, Jessica has continued push the statistics community toward more understanding and less rote application, and her work has had a direct impact on the undergraduate statistics curricula.

Beyond her books and other scholarship, Jessica has had an impact in the statistics education community through major leadership roles. At the undergraduate level, she was the Chair of the Consortium for the Advancement of Undergraduate Statistics Education (CAUSE) where she oversaw the creation of the comprehensive and essential website that serves as a resource for undergraduate teachers and the establishment of the electronic Conference on Teaching Statistics (eCOTS), a virtual conference which allows teachers of any means to gather biennially to share ideas and resources.

At the high school level, Jessica served as Chief Reader for the AP Statistics exam. As Chief Reader, she was responsible for leading a group of university and high school teachers through the onerous task of consistent grading of hundreds of thousands of AP Exams each year. During Jessica's time as chief reader, she was responsible for the assessment of almost 1,000,000 students! Additionally, as professional development for the readers, each year she brought in a well-regarded speaker who examined current issues in introductory statistics.

As the Chief Reader, Jessica's outreach extended past the AP Reading to a broader group of AP teachers. Every year she gave a talk at the AP Annual Conference (primarily attended by high school teachers) in which she went over the rubrics, common student errors, and teaching tips for all of the questions from that year's exam. She posted the talks on her home page so that teachers who could not attend the conference could view them. She also wrote a report with common student errors and teaching tips. Jessica's work as the Chief Reader has had a direct positive impact on the professional development of the AP statistics readers, AP statistics teachers, and AP statistics students.

A passionate advocate for statistical literacy for all, Jessica's impact extends beyond the classroom. She has written numerous papers on what educated citizens should know about statistics, and even papers on "What your future doctor should know about statistics." Even in her "retirement" Jessica continues to speak and write on the importance of community education in the service of enabling statistically literate citizens, including giving workshops for science writers, the National Park Service, and staff of the U.S. Congress.

In addition to her leadership within the statistics education community, Jessica has also been a passionate and effective advocate for statistics education in the wider statistics community. As President of the American Statistical Association, Jessica developed presidential initiatives related to statistics in the media and statistics education. She was able to create Statistical Media Ambassadors who are trained and can work directly with the media when the ASA is called to provide experts on a given statistical topic. Her second initiative was a program that enables ASA members to go into high school classrooms to talk about what they do. Pairing working statisticians with engaged high school students allows the students to get excited about the myriad possible ways that statistics can be used in the real world.

Jessica has also served as Chair or President of the Caucus for Women in Statistics, the International Biometric Society, and the Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies. She has held leadership roles in the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the International Association for Statistical Education. She has been an advocate for statistics education within each of these organizations.

On a personal level, Jessica has been a mentor and role model. It was a chance interaction with Jessica at a WNAR meeting in 1976 that proved to be a pivotal moment for Roxy and convinced her that there was a place for people like her in the profession. Jessica was a role model and mentor to Jo while Jo was a graduate student at UC Davis, and Jo still turns to Jessica for advice on how to navigate professional and ethical dilemmas. Brad appreciates Jessica being a trusted colleague and a rock of support during difficult times, and describes Jessica as a model for the

phrase "learning in the company of friends." Jessica is a role model not only for us, but also for our entire profession.

There are many people who have had an impact on statistics education, but few have been as influential and visionary as Jessica. Jessica's work has encouraged us all to see statistics education differently and to reflect on our classroom and professional practice. She has broadened the discussion of the role of statistical thinking in all areas of life, and the richness of her own life has informed her work as a statistician and an educator.

As we continue to look for ways to have an impact in the statistics education community, we continue to look to Jessica as an exemplar. Jessica has made exceptional contributions to our field, and just looking at her accomplishments makes us feel like total slackers! We marvel at what she has accomplished, and she has done it all with humor, grace, and an enthusiasm that is contagious. We believe that she is incredibly deserving of this award.

Roxy Peck
Professor Emerita
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
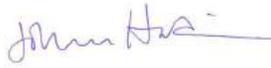
Johanna Hardin
Professor
Pomona College

Brad Hartlaub
Professor
Kenyon College

Attached letters of support from:
Helen MacGillivray
Ron Wasserstein
Kari Lock Morgan
Ann Cannon
Stacey Handcock

Attached email statements of support from:
Larry Lesser
Beth Chance
Nick Horton
Nathan Tintle
Ken Koehler
Jeff Witmer
Amanda Goldbeck
Anna Bargagliotti
Michele Guindani

Rob Gould

Congratulations, Jessica!

I first got to know Jessica way back at the ICOTS in South Africa, when I joined her and Wes to see the penguins at the Cape. I was a bit intimidated...the world-famous textbook author. But I needn't have worried. She was fun and witty and fascinating to talk to. Plus, there were penguins. I've been lucky to have many more opportunities over the years to get to know Jessica although, strangely -- given that she lived just about 40 miles away for a number of years -- most of those opportunities happened at far-flung locales. I learned lots about how to teach from her talks, papers, and our conversations. When I was asked to write something for Jessica's tribute book, my first reaction was that I couldn't believe she hadn't already received the award. But then I realized that her position on the CAUSE board for the past few years made her ineligible. My next thought was Thank God! There's no way that any committee that compared me to Jessica would give the award to anyone but Jessica. So ... thank you, Jessica, for giving others a chance to get this award!

Jessica, congratulations, and thanks for all you've contributed to the statistics community.

"The All-star Statistician Rockstar Band"
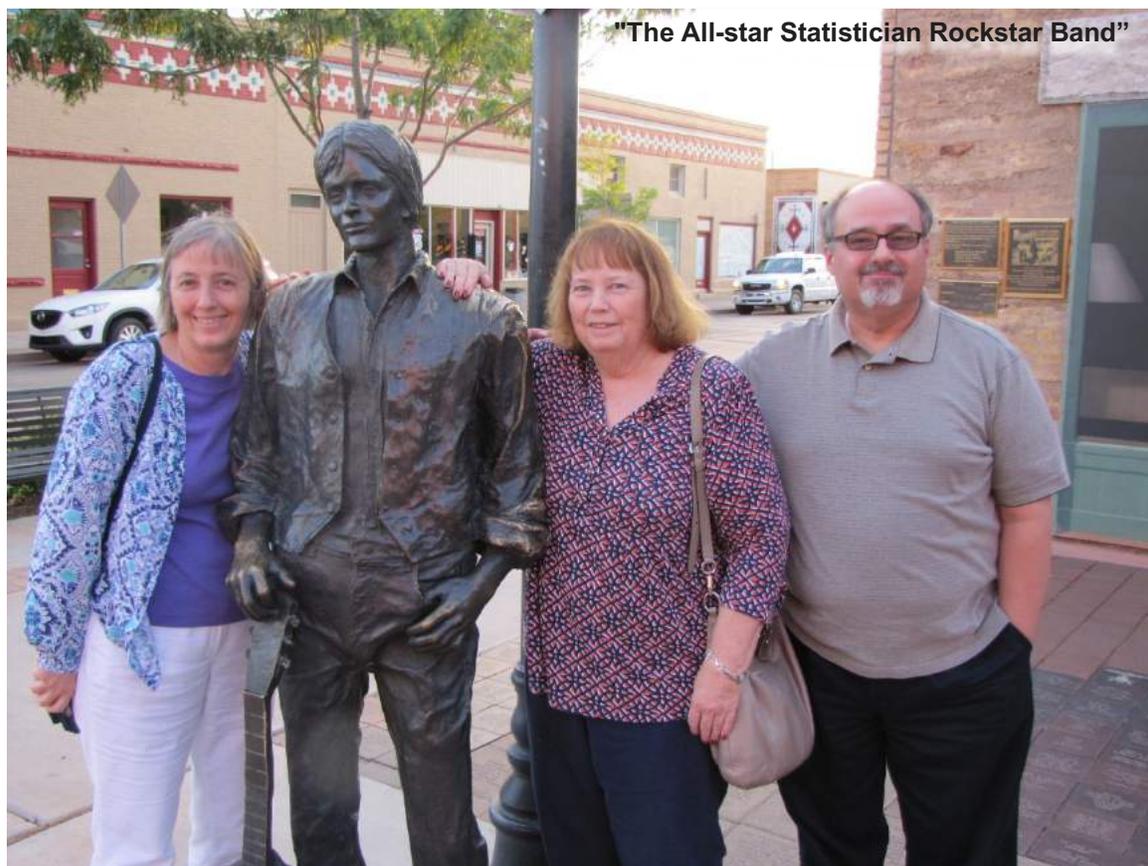
Congratulations on receiving the CAUSE Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education, Jessica! It is very well-deserved! You have consistently gone above and beyond in your teaching and student interactions. I was enrolled in an applied core class you taught during my first year of graduate school. Apart from making the class extremely engaging and making yourself available to discuss anything outside of class, you gave me the option to take exams half an hour after the scheduled time at a testing center on campus. You made this accommodation for me because I had to wake up at the crack of dawn and commute 2 hours in public transit to make it at the normally scheduled time. This was the only class that I was able to do this for and I was the most well-rested and ready for the exams because of your accommodation. I will never forget this kindness and I know you have gone above and beyond in your kindness and accommodations for many of your other students and colleagues. Thank you and congratulations again!!

Maricela

Maricela Cruz

Jessica,

Since I never took a class from you, never worked on research with you, never TA'ed for you, never helped you with projects like the AP stats grading, I'm not sure if you know how much of an impact you've had on me as a statistics educator. Nonetheless, you have. Most of my time at UCI was while you were chair, and I got the opportunity to see what a department with a stronger teaching focus looked like. Every year, I use parapsychology examples to help students better understand the philosophy underlying Bayesian statistics. Your work on teaching statistical literacy has been the prime mover for our development of a state-approved gen-ed course in statistical literacy for New Mexico. What success I've had as a teacher of statistics owes more to you than you probably realize. You have been one of a few great role models I've had for statistics education, both in my teaching and in showing me how to promote a culture where conceptual understanding is valued. Thank you, so much, for all the things you've taught me.

Fletcher

Fletcher Christensen

It is 20 years since I first read "Seeing Through Statistics." I immediately decided, "That is what our intro stat class should be."

This year it might finally become that. In 40 years I have so many memories of Jessica: a bar in Kaikoura, another in New Orleans, a hotel in San Francisco, drinking her scotch without permission (the Jury is still out on that one), a midnight drive to LA in a 60's Dodge rag-top trying, over the roar, to discuss ESP tests and the stopping rule principal, writing two papers together, trying to convince her to accept a nomination for ASA president, admiring both her mind and her heart.

My love to you Jessica. Well deserved!

Ron

Ron Christensen

Jessica,

Over the past forty years you have demonstrated excellence in teaching a variety of forward-looking statistics courses, innovated in creative ways, published a number of foundational articles and textbooks that continue to shape the field, and engaged in professional service to help foment change. The impact of your work has been profound nationally and internationally. You have been an amazing mentor and colleague: always full of ideas and energy. And you will always be the "Education President" of the ASA in my eyes.

We are lucky that you have been so engaged with the profession so effectively for so long.

Warmly,

Nick

Nick Horton

Jessica -

Congratulations! You have changed the face of statistics education, and this award is incredibly well deserved. As the first female statistician I had ever met, you have been a role model for me since I joined you on this journey. I have relished our conversations, and your work always gives me food for thought. Even more importantly, you are an incredibly lovely person who is a joy to be around. I strive to advance statistics (and data science!) education with your successes as my exemplar. Cheers to you and thank you for all you've done for me and the entire community. You have my deepest gratitude and best wishes.

xoxo, Jo

Jo Hardin

2015 JSM

Kenyon College

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

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Brad Hartlaub

Dear Jessica,

I don't remember what year we met, but I certainly remember the first time we ate a meal together at a JSM in the early 90s. We were sitting side-by-side and one of our friends, who will remain nameless in this letter, suggested that we play credit card roulette to pay for the bill. There were approximately 12 people at our large table, and we were having a great time. My recollection is that the two of us were reluctant to play this game where the owner of the first card that was pulled by the waitress would pay for all of the desserts and the owner of the second card pulled would pay for all of the meals. My card was pulled first and your card was pulled second. Thanks again for that great meal that kicked off a long relationship that has lasted over thirty years.

I have learned so much from you over the years, and there is no doubt that your hard work, compassion, excellent writing, and outstanding talks have made me a better teacher. After three decades of teaching, I still turn to your textbooks and articles for ideas and data for exams and quizzes. You have impacted numerous students and teachers, and I wish I could think of a good way to repay you for everything that you have done for me. Until I come up with a better idea, I will promise to pay for your meal the next time we are together at a conference or meeting. I owe you much more than that for your positive influence on my life.

In addition to your outstanding professional contributions that have had an immeasurable impact on many of us, your personal touch and care for others are what really set you apart from others. When someone is having a tough day, you go out of your way to go over and talk to that individual, especially at AP Readings or professional conferences. Personally, I appreciated all of your encouragement over the years, and it means more to me than can say.

Congratulations on your well deserved 2021 USCOTS Lifetime Achievement Award! After a very demanding year, I hope you will take plenty of time to relax and enjoy life.

Your Friend,
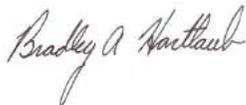
Bradley A. Hartlaub
Professor of Mathematics and Statistics

Dear Jessica,

You are one of my statistics heroes and mentors! You have *exemplified lifetime dedication* to the statistics education community. I am grateful to be your colleague and so appreciative of the continued support and generosity you have given to my professional endeavors over the years.

There are many fond memories I have of our times working together over the years but one stands out as special. When you were serving as the AP Statistics Chief Reader, you contacted me in 2016 to ask if I would be interested in assuming the RMS assistant position serving as the liaison between the Chief Reader and the RMS logistics side of the reading. Since retiring as Chief Reader in 2009, I had made the decision not to return to the reading so as to spend more time in the summer with my family. But after 7 years away, I did miss the comradery of being with the AP Statistics family. You recognized this and you were kind enough to provide me with an opportunity to come back where I could serve in a new role plus you knew I had always wanted to learn more about how the logistics side operates. Not only did this role allow me to work closely with you as CR, but also Mario and Gisela, the Chief Aides. When I was Chief Reader in Louisville, Mario served as Chief Aide and made my role as CR easier due to his amazing leadership with the flow of the exams. There is a bond that builds between the CR and the Chief Aide. I will always treasure that you gave me the chance to return to the AP Statistics reading in a role that challenged me to learn new skills and that allowed me to renew old friendships and to make new friendships.

I know you are 'retired' but please continue inspiring all of us with your smile, your energy, and your kindness! Congratulations Jessica on receiving the first George Cobb Lifetime Award – you are most deserving!

Chris

Chris Franklin

2018 Reading

2016 Reading

Jessica,

I'm so excited that you have learned that you have been given this great honor! It was so nice to work under your leadership at the AP Stats Reading. I really appreciate all the support you gave to me and James with regards to the Fun Run and other social events that help to bond our group. The AP Statistics crew is truly a special group and you have been a big part of making it that way. Congratulations on winning the CAUSE Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education!

- Erica

Erica Chauvet

AP Statistics Fun Run, Kansas City

Joel Dubin

Dear Jessica,

A huge and well-deserved congratulations for winning this major statistics education award! You have accomplished so much, and influenced so many lives, within the statistics community and well beyond. Both Kelly and I still recommend your Seeing Through Statistics book to anyone who asks about a stats text where intuition, insight, and fantastic examples are of paramount interest. There is a reason so many people in such varied fields have embraced it! And though it has been a few years since our last gathering, (Kelly and) I have such fond memories of spending time in Winters, and later in Irvine, where your generosity as a scholar was matched as a friend and host.

Very best, Joel.

Larry Lesser

Just as I predicted – that's an
ESP joke – I'm
So happy the one whose writing helped us in
Seeing through statistics and whose deep
Involvements have ranged from
Chief Reader for the AP exam to
ASA President is recognized to

Merit

Unbiasedly
This award and the
Tributes
Shared by so many you've inspired.

Congratulations, Jessica, and thanks for being
a wonderful colleague and a true ambassador!

Hi Jessica—

Congratulations on this great honor! It is certainly well deserved. The picture was from the 2001 AP Reading, when we were Table Leader partners. It was my first year as a TL and you were a great partner—very encouraging and supportive. I am sure you remember some of the other people in the picture. 😊 Note that this was when we could take photos in the reading rooms— and have open beverage containers on the tables! This encouragement continued through the years, including your term as Chief Reader. One of my favorite memories was walking with you from the hotel on the final morning of your final year, trying to hide my purple starfish shirt, and then seeing your expression when the wave of purple shirts hit you at the top of the escalator. I can't believe we were able to pull that one off! What I most appreciate about you is how unassuming you are. While simultaneously serving as ASA President and Chief Reader, you made time to talk to everyone at the reading, no matter if they were a college professor, high school teacher, or room aide. (Thanks for the frequent flier program tips, but the way.) Your example of humble service is all too rare and won't be forgotten!

Sincerely, Josh Tabor

Josh Tabor

Dear Jessica,

Congratulations to you on this well-deserved honor! For all of your contributions to statistical literacy, statistics education, and my own professional development ... thank you!!! Over the last 20+ years, I have enjoyed working with and learning from you in professional conversations about <u>Seeing Through Statistics</u> and/or <u>Mind On Statistics</u> and in personal conversations about life, family, travel destinations, and safari adventures. One of the pictures I've included is one of me, you, and Wes at Panama Jack's in Capetown in 2002 when we attended the ICOTS meetings; the three of us were having dinner before going our separate ways on safari and wondering if this would be our "last supper". We made it and I've certainly enjoyed the many meals we've shared since then! What an honor it is for me to be a part of this celebration of your tremendous and expert skill, effort, and compassion. Again, congratulations to you and a heartfelt "thank you" for sharing your generous spirit with so many of us!
Love,
Carolyn (Crockett Lewis)

Helen MacGillivray

Congratulations Jessica!

Wonderful to know you're receiving the 2021 CAUSE-USCOTS Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education. It is indeed a fitting accolade of all you've done – you are held in high regard across the worldwide statistical community. The clarity of the perception and depth of your understanding of statistical thinking are matched by your ability and commitment to seeing through learners' eyes, and your capabilities, organisation and leadership in communicating these to wider audiences. In thinking of you at the time of the award ceremony, I will also remember our discussions and interactions, face-to-face and virtual, and fun times – both never enough, due to other demands or responsibilities always happening. I had the honour of inviting and introducing you as a keynote speaker at ICOTS 2010 in Lubljana, as plenary speaker at OZCOTS 2012 in Adelaide, and President's speaker at ISI WSC 2019 in Kuala Lumpur – we had many interesting email discussions on that. I especially valued our discussions at OZCOTS 2012 about 'our' book when I had been given a completely free hand in writing a version for Australia and New Zealand. We shared a year of being presidents-elect (you of ASA, me of ISI). It's a pity we could not have been presidents at the same time and plotted something, but, as always you gave your all to that responsibility as you do to all that is asked of you. As I write this, it is one of those spectacularly clear and cool Brisbane winter days like those lovely days you and Wes spent with us in the rainforest and at Caloundra in 2012. We hope to share more with you in the future, but for now we send the utmost of congratulations on your award so very richly deserved in every way.

Helen MacG

Jessica, thank you for doing one less thing! This award is long overdue 😊 As I told you once, what impresses me the most is whenever I turn a different corner – you are there! You have contributed to statistics and statistics education and the community in so many different ways. You are always popping up in a new capacity that I didn't know you were involved in. You were even gracious and kind to me when I asked how you do it all. I first met you at the Chance workshop in like 1995 and you were already well-known for your contributions to statistics literacy and your impact has just been exponential since then, whether it is accessible textbooks focused on how to read the news and be an educated citizen, or talks at international teaching conferences that are repeatedly cited for their clarity and important messages. When I teach my "how to teach statistics" course, you are always one of my first calls to visit and you almost always say yes! There are few that can match your breadth of contribution or your warmth and humor serving the greater good.

Beth

Beth Chance

Jessica,

For many years you have been a leading figure in the world of statistics education. I have fond memories of having dinner with you at statistics education conferences around the world (Capetown, Ljubljana, Hong Kong) and of many insightful conversations about not just how to teach, but what to teach. You have helped the rest of us see things differently (that almost suggests the title of a textbook...) and move beyond incrementation change to a fresh way of thinking about statistics. Congratulations on the well-deserved recognition of a lifetime of influential work.

Jeff

Jeff Witmer

Dear Jessica,

Thank you for being so visionary! Our profession needs more people like you who can make beautiful pictures by coloring outside the lines. I'm so glad to know you. BIG congratulations on your award!

My best,

Amanda

Amanda Golbeck

Jessica,

I can't think of a more deserving person to win this award. Your contribution to stat ed has been so far reaching, from high school stat instructors through the AP program, to college faculty through your textbooks, to all ASA members through your time as ASA President when many of your initiatives were related to statistics education.

Most of all I want to say how much I enjoyed working with you as ACR. I learned so much from watching you take on that very difficult role, and do it so gracefully. Thank you for including me on that journey!

Congratulations!

Ann

Ann Cannon

Dear Jessica,

I am very excited to learn about your receiving the CAUSE Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education. This is of course very well deserved because of your many contributions. We are very fortunate to have had you at UC Irvine for a while and are grateful for the contributions that you made to your education program. You have certainly changed the world of statistics education for the better and given the importance that statistics education holds for society, this is really a wonderful achievement.

Congratulations,

Hal

Hal Stern

Dear Jessica,

Congratulations on being named the recipient of 2021 USCOTS Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education. I knew you way before I joined the department, but we did not meet until my interview. When I knew that UC Irvine Stats was hiring and everything that you have done in statistics education, I knew the department would be a right fit for a statistics educator and I had to apply. I feel extremely lucky that you generously continue to share your time and expertise with me. Thank you for being an inspiration and a great role model.

Congratulations! So well deserved.

Mine

Mine Dogucu

Jessica,

Thank you for your dedicated and wise leadership in statistics education. You are an internationally respected, forward thinking, visionary in statistics education and a role model to me and so many statistics educators. You truly epitomize the characteristics of the CAUSE lifetime achievement award. Congratulations!

Nathan

Nathan Tintle

From nomination packet: In addition to her excellent scholarship, teaching and widely used textbooks, Jessica has been a tireless promoter of the practical importance of providing high school and college students with a basic understanding of statistical thinking to enable them to critically evaluate sources of information and use data to make decisions about important personal issues, such as health, nutrition and careers, and develop informed opinions about national and international policies throughout their lives. Over the last twenty-five years, Jessica has been an influential leader in the development and growth of the AP Statistics Program, serving as the Chief Reader from 2014 through 2018. This program currently annually provides a high-quality introduction to statistical reasoning and methodology for over 200,000 high school students, and it has provided workshops and training in teaching statistics to many hundreds of high school teachers. Jessica played important roles in recruiting teachers into the AP Statistics program and providing mentoring. She continues to inspire thousands high school and college teachers.

Ken Koehler

Jessica,

Congratulations! This award is well-deserved. What you have accomplished throughout your career is incredible. Your advocacy for statistical literacy has already had a profound influence on K-12 and collegiate education in the United States. Even now, in retirement, I know you still have more contributions to make to the fields of statistics and statistics education.

I would also like to say a big thank you on behalf of all the students' lives you have touched in the Department of Statistics at UCI. Personally, it has been an honor to be your student. I feel incredibly lucky to be one of the many recipients of your wisdom and advice. Words cannot express my sincere gratitude for your guidance, support, and kindness these past few years.

Thank you for being a role model to so many other women in statistics. Congratulations once again,

Wendy

Wendy Rummerfield

Dear Jessica,

So many congratulations for this achievement! It is a well-deserved recognition for all your work to develop statistical thinking in education.

We feel very lucky to have you as a friend, and we are looking forward to celebrating with you this achievement and many others to come!

Best,
Michele & Rohan

Michele & Rohan

2- and 4-legged friends February 2021 in Irvine

July 2017 in Morocco

Dear Jessica,

Congratulations on winning the lifetime achievement award! It is well deserved. I was fortunate to have been in Davis when "Seeing Through Statistics" was published and both you and the book changed how I approached introductory courses and, indeed, many applied courses beyond the introductory level. I am a better teacher for it and, as such, hundreds of my students learned more about Statistics as a result. Thank you for your dedication to Statistics Education and your discussions with me about the field.

--Mitch

Mitch Watnik

Dear Jessica,

Congratulations on your well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award! When I first applied to work in the Statistics Department at UCI, I wasn't seriously considering changing positions, but the knowledge that we would be colleagues motivated me to apply, and I'm so glad I did! Throughout my four years at UCI and beyond, you have been an amazing mentor to both myself and our students. Your work in statistics education has been an inspiration for my own teaching and research, and I am honored to have been colleagues with you. Thank you for all you have contributed to our discipline and thank you for the opportunities in my own career that arose due to your mentorship. Enjoy retirement and, as the AP Statistics Chief Reader would say, "soak in a job well done"!

With gratitude and admiration,

Stacey

Stacey Hancock

Victoria Falls
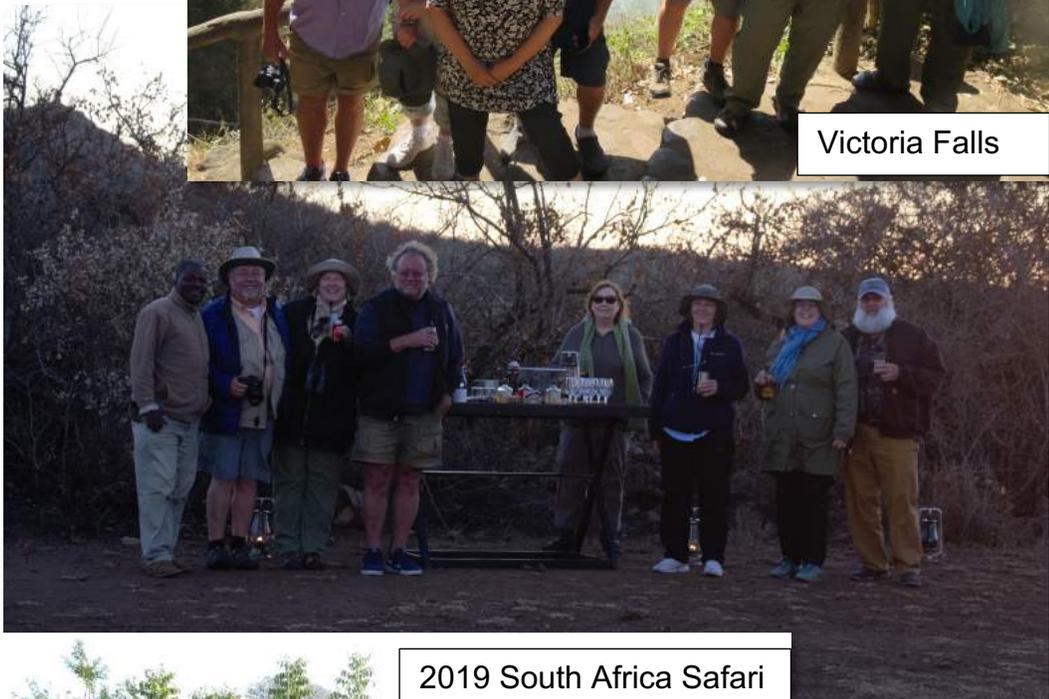
2019 South Africa Safari

My story with Jessica goes way back...

As a graduate student in 1976, I attended the WNAR meeting. That was my very first professional meeting. As I looked around at a room that was filled with what seemed to me at the time to be mostly older men, I found myself wondering what I was doing there and why I had thought graduate school in statistics was a good idea! On the second day of that conference, much to my surprise, a young woman named Jessica Utts got up to speak. You were giving a talk on your master's research and presenting a test you had developed called the "rainbow test" that looked at lack of fit in regression. As you were introduced and the title of your talk was announced, most of the audience was looking at you like you were crazy! But you just smiled and began your talk. By the end you had won them over, and I remember thinking at the time that maybe there was a place for someone like me in the profession. It was a pivotal moment for me--it convinced me that I should stay the course and finish my degree.

When you told the now famous starfish story at the AP Reading, I was reminded of 1997, and thought "It made a difference to ME!"

Since then, we have worked together, traveled together, rehearsed speed talks together, shopped together, and shared some memorable moments together. I consider you a valued friend as well as a colleague.

Congratulations on winning this well-deserved award recognizing all that you have done for the statistics education community. And from me, thanks for making me think hard about what I do in the classroom and motivating me to be a better teacher. And huge thanks for your friendship over the years.

Roxy

Sharing from Rich: I recall when first telling classmates I was to join the UCD Stat Dept, the response of "Isn't Jessica Utts there? She was on Larry King Live!" You were out of town during my interview; I admit to being rather intimidated meeting you when first arriving to campus. But of course, the nerves were quickly calmed by the Jessica laugh, the down-to-earth demeanor, the stories "I remember when…"; and learning we are fellow Harpur College alumni! I remember dog walks through Irvine talking Stat Ed and philosophies on chairing a Stat Dept, AP Readings in Lincoln, gluten free street tacos in Oceanside discussing Bayesian viewpoints, and Halloweens at the Winters estate where Statistics was far from our minds ☺.
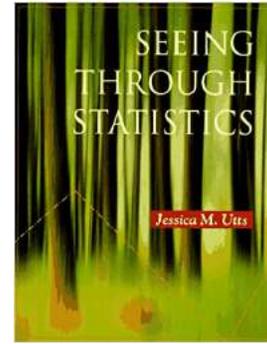
Jessica challenged us younglings on the cover art: Is it more than "seeing the forest through the trees"?!

Sharing from Juanjuan: You were also out of town during my interview at UC Davis! I remember receiving an email from you the week after with a number of questions on my teaching philosophy and research goals. I nervously wrote up my answers. Your response then came, very friendly, saying that you were satisfied. Over the years, you shared your books and data sets, and I have learned so much from the way you teach statistics. The seminar you gave at San Diego State University on the controversy surrounding p-values attracted so much interest that people would not leave even when it was time for lunch ☺.

Thank you for mentoring us during our early academic years, advising us through leadership and administrative roles in recent years, inspiring us as Statistics instructors, and just your friendship over the decades. You have been instrumental towards us becoming the statisticians we are today.

Congratulations Jessica on a well-earned and deserved lifetime achievement award!

Rich Levine & Juanjuan Fan

Jessica,

Thank you for inspiring the ASA and the statistical community to support statistical education at all levels. The inspiration comes from observing your energy, enthusiasm, and expertise that you so generously share with all of us. It also comes from the sense you project that others' ideas are important and worth considering, from your extraordinary kindness to all, and from your willingness to pack your bags and go anywhere to talk about improving the teaching of statistics to everyone who will listen. I'm deeply grateful for your work, and to be able to count you as a colleague and a friend.

Congratulations on this richly deserved recognition!

Ron

Ron Wasserstein

2019 JSM

Dear Jessica,

Congratulations on receiving this well-deserved lifetime achievement award from CAUSE at the 2021 USCOTS. Sorry it will not be held in person at Penn State this year, due to the pandemic. You have contributed so much to the teaching of statistics. Your two textbooks were the foundation of both Stat 100 Seeing through Statistics and Stat 200 Mind on Statistics with Bob Heckard, during my tenure as department head at Penn State. The years I taught Stat 100, after stepping down as head, I enjoyed the perspective you created through that text using real situations where statistical thinking is critical for understanding risk in everyday events.

Personally, you were just finishing your PhD when I arrived at Penn State in 1975, so we go back a long way. More recently, when we overlapped on the NISS board of trustees in the 00's. It has been my pleasure watching your career develop at UC Davis and more recently at UC Irvine. This award is icing on the cake of an outstanding career in making statistics accessible to thousands of students.

My sincere congratulations!

Jim

Jim Rosenberger

2011 JSM

It is wonderful that Jessica Utts is being awarded the CAUSE Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education!

Adam

With Adam & Corina

Young Choi PhD Defense
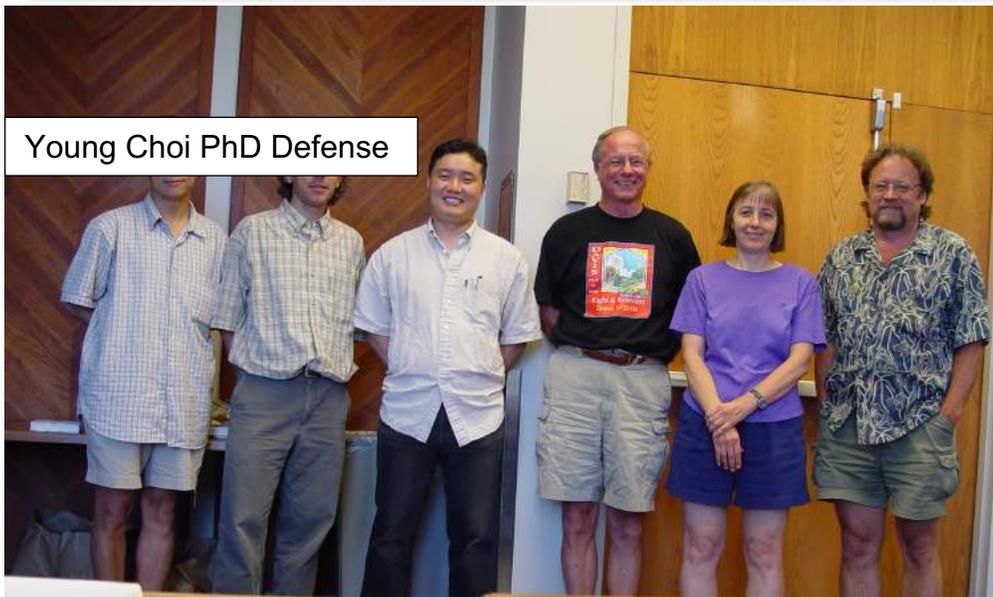
2016 Presidential address

ASA AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION
Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics®

2006 CAUSE meeting

My first semester as an assistant professor I taught introductory statistics for nursing students. I was handed one of Jessica Utt's books to teach with. Her book was very influential in shaping my thinking about teaching statistics. I am now in my thirteenth year as a faculty member and I still refer to Jessica's work. She has had so many contributions to statistics education and the Lifetime Achievement Award is a wonderful way to honor such an influential person in statistics education.

Anna Bargagliotti

Dear Jessica,

Congratulations on winning the USCOTS Lifetime Achievement Award! I remember quite vividly the first time I saw you speak (ICOTS 2010 in Slovenia) – I can still picture the crowded room and being completely riveted by everything you said. I also remember meeting you at that conference – as a graduate student at the time I was nervous to approach one of the famous plenary speakers, but I was struck by how approachable, friendly, and encouraging you were. I have found your career inspiring for so many reasons – your ability to turn a novel vision for a statistical literacy course into a widespread reality that has positively impacted so many students, your demonstration that someone can be a tenured professor at a research university and still make a huge impact in statistics education, and your example that someone with such substantial stat ed contributions can rise to the top and become president of the ASA. Thank you for being such an inspiration!

Best,

Kari

Kari Lock Morgan

Jessica,

Congratulations on this very well-deserved honor to be the first to receive this lifetime achievement award since it's been named for George. You have made tremendous contributions to statistics education through your books, articles, presentations, and service. Like George, your writings and talks are always thought-provoking and change-inspiring. You have had wide-ranging impact on countless students and peers, and I'm very glad to include myself on that long list.

Some of your most lasting contributions have come through your example, as you have always displayed tremendous grace and kindness, as well as dedication and intelligence. I think grace and kindness are the more important and impressive qualities.

Thanks for all that you've given to me and others. I hope you will continue to make contributions and that our paths will continue to cross.

Congratulations again and best wishes,

Allan

Allan Rossman

Jessica proves the existence of ESP* by Seeing Through Statistics
* Extraodinary Statistical Perceptiveness

To Jessica,

The themes in the tributes above are clear:

Leader
Educator
Inspiration
Mentor
Friend
Excellence in each

Most Importantly – All True

Dennis Pearl

The George Cobb Lifetime Achievement Award in Statistics Education is a biennial award presented by CAUSE at the U.S. Conference On Teaching Statistics to an individual who, over an extended period of time, has made lasting contributions with broad impact to the field of statistics education.

The award committee is made up of the Director of CAUSE, the Chair of the CAUSE Board of Directors, and selected past winners. The 2021 committee (Dennis Pearl, Allan Rossman, Danny Kaplan, Chris Franklin, Mike Shaughnessy, and Ann Watkins) presented the award to Jessica Utts on Wednesday June 30th, 2021 at a virtual ceremony.