

BELGIAN RESEARCH IN BAYSIAN STATISTICS REWARDED

Although it is still a topic of marginal (but rising) interest in our Society, Belgian research in Bayesian biostatistics was at the forefront at the last edition of the Joint Statistical Meetings (Washington D.C., 2009).

Indeed, the four Savage Award finalists, including two former PhD students from UCLouvain and KULeuven, were invited for a dedicated session chaired by Prof. J.G. Ibrahim (Univ. of North Carolina) and organized by Prof. M. Vannucci (Rice University) for the ASA section on Bayesian Statistical Science.

This Award, named in honor of Leonard J. Savage, is bestowed each year to two outstanding doctoral dissertations in Bayesian econometrics and statistics, one each in "Theory and Methods" and one in "Applied Methodology". The theses submitted for the Award were first read and scored by three members of a Jury. The finalists, who obtained the Savage Travel Award, had their thesis ranked in the first four positions. Then, a Jury of six members made a detailed reading of the theses to select the two Savage Awards.

Lorenzo Trippa (L. Bocconi Univ., Milano) obtained the Savage Award in "Theory and Methods" and Alejandro Jara (associate professor at Univ. de Concepción, Chile) was preferred to Donatello Telesca (Univ. of Washington, Seattle) and Astrid Jullion (Biostatistician at UCB Pharma, Belgium) for the Savage Award in "Applied Methodology".

Alejandro Jara did his PhD thesis (entitled "Bayesian semiparametric methods for the analysis of complex data") at KULeuven under the supervision of Prof. E. Lesaffre, I. Gijbels and G. Verbeke. Astrid Jullion did her thesis (entitled "Adaptive Bayesian P-splines models for fitting time-activity curves and estimating associated clinical measures in Positron Emission Tomography and Pharmacokinetic studies") at UCLouvain under the supervision of Prof. P. Lambert.

After Prof. Luc Bauwens (CORE, UCLouvain) in 1984, this is the second time in 30 editions that the Savage Award honours a research in Bayesian statistics made in our country.

Philippe Lambert