MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ANALYTICS
CLASS OF 2017

STUDENT PROFILES

Employer information sessions: September–January
On-campus interviews: January–March
Graduation date: May 7, 2017

For information, please contact:

Dr. Michael Rappa
Institute for Advanced Analytics
analytics@ncsu.edu
http://analytics.ncsu.edu

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MSA CLASS OF 2017 DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of students enrolled: 120

U.S. citizens or permanent residents: 90%

North Carolina residents: 56%

Number of countries of origin: 19

Prior states of residency (22): AR, AZ, CA, DC, FL, GA, ID, IL, KS, MA, MD, NC, NH, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA

Percent who are women: 43%

Average age / Median age: 26 / 24

Average number of years since undergraduate degree: 4

Graduating with academic honors as undergraduates: 66%

Average undergraduate grade point average: 3.60

Percent enrolled with a prior graduate degree: 18%

Previously employed full-time (3 or more years): 45%

Range in age: 21 – 51
Jessie Allen

Hometown: Durham, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Duke University
  Master of Environmental Management, 2011
- Kalamazoo College
  B.A., Biology, 2007
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Jessie is a big-picture thinker; she believes in the power of information to influence systemic change. She is motivated to solve complex problems with innovation and collaboration, while clearly communicating solutions to a variety of audiences. In her previous graduate thesis, she worked to model the effectiveness of several innovative stormwater management practices to reduce nutrient loads to the city’s drinking water supply. She took the initiative to pitch the solution to city officials and the results influenced them to reprioritize their approach toward meeting new state water quality standards.

Jessie has spent the last four years at Research Triangle Institute (RTI) tackling dynamic problems on the leading edge of scientific understanding. In her role as lead analyst/modeler, she collaborated with professionals across disciplines to create new methodologies around river basin modeling, ecosystem service valuation, and geospatial analytics. Jessie’s positive attitude — combined with her communication and organizational skills — served as the glue that held the team together during tough challenges. She was able to lead teammates through tight budget and time restrictions, as well as changes in methodology or project scope.

Outside of the work environment, Jessie loves going on long hikes and traveling around the world. Last spring, she combined these interests as she hiked 200 miles of the Camino de Santiago through France and Spain. She enjoyed the physical challenge and camaraderie built between fellow hikers working toward a common goal. The kindness and generosity that she experienced on that trip continues to inspire her to strive to better herself and influence change for others.
Carl's passion for science and strategic thinking eventually led him to the field of analytics. Throughout high school and college, he excelled in math, chemistry, and physics — subjects that require the understanding and implementation of intricate concepts. In 2011, he began medical school; however, after starting clinical rotations in his third year, he decided to transition to a field of study that emphasized his interests in innovative thinking and complex problem solving.

In his search, a friend introduced Carl to the world of analytics, describing his work at M&T Bank as using critical thinking and data to drive credit underwriting policy. Carl spent a year and a half at M&T Bank developing risk management strategy for the indirect lending portfolios before attending the Institute for Advanced Analytics. He appreciated the different challenges that each day presented and the variety of methods available to tackle them, such as using cluster analysis to identify potential growth segments within the portfolios.

Carl enjoys golfing for half of the year and skiing for the other half. Two years prior to starting medical school, he joined his father as a member of the Ski Patrol at Holimont Ski Resort. Coming from a family of thinkers, he also enjoys strategic board games including The Settlers of Catan and Agricola.
Code is powerful. That is the idea that Sean conveyed to his students during countless application development classes. The simple elegance of coding had always intrigued him and the constant problem solving made him very methodical. Driven by an authentic zeal for programming and the gratification of helping others to embark upon their own journeys, he taught evening classes for nearly two years. He believes code is powerful because it brings people together.

Sean applied the concepts he learned through programming to his day job and quickly stood apart from his coworkers due to his technical prowess and persistent efforts to analyze data. He assisted the IT Development team in the maintenance and debugging of an analytical tool used to generate reports for one of the company's largest clients. Sean would spend hours combing through data and breaking down formulas to understand how a process worked, refusing to stop until a solution was reached. His teaching experience then made it easy for him to communicate his findings to both technical and non-technical audiences. He was enlightened, a career in analytics was the correct solution for him.

Often, Sean can be found working hard in the kitchen as he tries to master his second passion — the art of cooking. His varied cuisine choices have been influenced by his travels to different parts of the world. From bibimbap and shrimp and grits, to a fantastic chimichurri that goes great with steak tacos, his creativity is sure to please any palate.
Marc Armbruster

Hometown: Long Island, New York
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Grinnell College
  B.A., Economics, 2008
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

A skeptic from an early age, Marc’s interest in data goes hand in hand with his desire to separate truth from noise in everyday life. At Grinnell College, he gravitated towards economics and, in the process, discovered an affinity for the predictive power of econometrics.

His work can be characterized by a penchant for problem solving and an innate love of precision and efficiency. Dissatisfied with his team’s process for balancing apparel size production (while working as a demand planner for the Adidas group), Marc worked on his own time to reinvent it. He created an Excel tool that continued to save work hours long beyond his tenure.

Eager to tackle a greater variety of challenges, Marc eventually moved to the consulting industry. At a higher education advisory firm in Boston, he excelled as an analyst and survey methodology expert. While there, he discovered a talent for translating data findings into insights for clients. Always eager to build new skills, Marc moved to Kantar Retail where he successfully scoped and project-managed large-scale research and consulting engagements for Fortune 500 CPG and retail companies.

When he’s not busy crunching numbers, Marc enjoys running 10Ks, training in martial arts, and beating his friends in fantasy football. During moments of downtime, you usually can find him at home reading the New York Times or watching a true crime or sports documentary on Netflix.
Catherine carries a tape measure and a Leatherman multi-tool in her purse — two useful tools that are a manifestation of her design engineering capabilities. From creating scaffolds for cartilage replacement to 3D modeling and the prototyping of helmet lights for combat soldiers, Catherine has enjoyed a career in product design and development. She has fulfilled her desire to understand how an innovative idea is transformed into a reality. However, after registering as a marrow donor for Be The Match, Catherine found herself wondering how cancer treatments and their corresponding effects are recorded, analyzed, and used to help patients. Her desire to make a true difference in improving peoples’ lives is the driving force to steer her professional endeavors towards data analytics.

Catherine is a “people person” and is quick to connect with those around her; she strongly supports interdisciplinary work. Catherine has been told she focuses on achieving goals in an organized and methodical manner that has proven successful with many types of clients in the consulting business. Teaching two engineering courses and conducting 3D CAD and design workshops were particularly rewarding to her because she was able to share real-world examples to engage the students.

Catherine welcomes a good challenge, a good adventure, and a good joke. Her family brings those into her personal life especially while throwing the ball outside, playing board games, or watching American Ninja Warrior.
The ability to find interesting insights in seemingly mundane industries, like paper manufacturing, came naturally to Reid. When his work at the U.S. Department of Justice Antitrust Division presented him with mergers in less glamorous industries, he jumped into the analysis, eager to learn the intricacies of a new industry. His tireless work there culminated in being honored with the Assistant Attorney General's Award of Distinction, and perhaps more importantly, the realization that analytics was his calling.

The decision to work at the DOJ was a natural outgrowth of Reid’s innate preference for broad-based learning. He has long held wide-ranging interests and, as an undergrad, found it hard to choose just one major. The decision to study economics, and subsequently pursue analytics, were born out of the desire to equip himself with a framework to analyze and tackle a variety of complex real-world problems. Confronted with the realization that some of the most interesting problems were beyond the scope of his current skillset, Reid decided to attend the Institute for Advanced Analytics to gain the tools necessary to continue pursuing his passion.

From the family's World Book collection as a child to NPR's TED Radio Hour as an adult, Reid has long enjoyed discovering the extraordinary in the seemingly ordinary. Particularly captivated by space exploration, Reid has enjoyed both works of fiction and non-fiction including Interstellar and Dune. He has a competitive side (which has toned down considerably since his teenage years) and especially enjoys racquetball and ping pong. Most of all, he enjoys the precious time spent with his wife and two boys who are growing up way too fast.
As a youth, John made his Topps baseball cards play real games — using a marble for a ball and a Crayola crayon as the bat — for the sole purpose of calculating the players’ batting averages. Since then, his love of data has only grown through examining probabilities while playing bridge hands, establishing the navigation involved in piloting an airplane, and optimizing several fantasy football lineups each year.

After fulfilling his dream of working for the FBI as a handwriting analyst, where he helped reconstruct some obliterated writings of Thomas Jefferson, John transitioned into two professions that put him in the forefront of human interaction — high school teaching and stand-up comedy. Both of these trained him to become a clear, concise, and commanding communicator. His classroom presence earned him two teacher-of-the-year nominations, while his creativity and humor carried him through live comedic performances in over thirty states.

With optimism and charm constantly on display, John met people from all over the country. In doing so, he realized a common theme — people just want to matter. John’s screenplay on the topic of making a difference in life has been put into production. When he’s not immersed in data, John revels in the detailed writings of Jasper Fforde. And in each of the last five summers, John has spent a week in Missouri grading AP Statistics exams and partaking in as much Kansas City style barbeque as humanly possible.
Growing up, Sneha always enjoyed puzzles and strategy games, often competing with her brother to see who could first solve a Sudoku or win a chess match. This excitement for problem solving carried on, ultimately leading her to the field of computer science, which presented her with a variety of logic problems. Throughout undergrad, she developed the patience and tenacity needed to tackle complex problems and come up with efficient solutions.

During her internship at SAS, Sneha had the opportunity to apply her problem-solving skills to the world of analytics and cloud computing. Her responsibilities involved developing software for a cloud infrastructure that hosted a Customer Intelligence analytics solution. She worked alongside other engineers to integrate new tools into the cloud environments, helping the development operations become more efficient. The capability of the solution to analyze large amounts of data and derive value for businesses sparked her interest in analytics and the potential to bring new insights into a variety of fields.

As an undergraduate, Sneha enjoyed serving as an ambassador for Women in Science and Engineering as well as the computer science department at NC State University. She eagerly took any opportunities to share her experiences with prospective students and encourage more women to pursue STEM fields. During her time off, Sneha enjoys taking trips with family and friends — whether it is across the country to California or across the world to India. She also enjoys practicing yoga as a relaxing start to her weekend mornings.

Sneha Bhalodia

Hometown: Cary, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
  B.S., magna cum laude, Computer Science with minor in Statistics, 2016
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016
Kosta Blank

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: Israel

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Wilmington
  B.S., summa cum laude, Business Administration with minor in Computer Science, 2013
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Kosta describes himself as a “positive attitude realist” who loves to tackle challenges, achieve results, and learn in the process. He has always been an extremely fast learner with the ability to easily adapt to new environments. Due to his family moving frequently, he got to live in multiple countries and is fluent in three different languages. Kosta has been an avid tennis player since his youth. As part of a national tennis team he traveled to seventeen countries across four different continents, met extraordinary people, and was exposed to different cultures around the globe. Kosta’s dedication to tennis led him to a university in the United States, where he completed four years as an award-winning student athlete. He was the recipient of the Chancellor Cup — the award for academic and athletic excellence that is presented to one student-athlete each year.

While studying computer science, he came to the realization that he truly enjoys spending time on developing algorithms to solve problems. Coding became his passion after an internship with a QA team where Kosta developed an automated data analysis tool. He then worked as a software developer, and subsequently a data analyst at Credit Suisse. Kosta has had very unique experiences working on Hadoop technology stack and programming in Java and Python. A strong development background, combined with extensive statistical skills, makes him a great data scientist.

Kosta enjoys playing guitar, hiking to waterfalls, and camping in the mountains. He likes travelling abroad, as well as taking road trips around the country whenever an opportunity presents itself.
Maria Bohannon

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.S., with Distinction, Biology with minor in Marine Sciences, 2002
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Maria’s fascination with the impact of analytics began as a scientist in the agriculture biotech industry. While measuring plant roots and counting leaves, she became curious about the fate of the thousands of data points she was collecting. She volunteered to extract and communicate the data, joining a cross-functional team of data miners. She went on to lead this team for three years, winning an award for her effective leadership. As her skills grew, Maria became known in her workplace as the go-to person for data mining and visualization. Her work ranged from simply helping a colleague create the perfect graph for demonstrating an experiment’s outcome to building complex visualizations and dashboards. She earned a division-wide recognition for constructing a visualization tool allowing scientists to explore a corn varieties data set.

Maria excels at finding insight in large sets of data and communicating the results. While analyzing several years of crop experiment data, she found that plants with a specific pattern of greenhouse results had increased yield over other plants. After conveying these conclusions to stakeholders, she was able to improve the quality of the team’s field testing.

Outside of class, Maria loves to make music and has played the violin in her church orchestra for the past 10 years. She enjoys traveling and has been on mission trips to five different countries on four continents. In 2011, she combined her love of science, travel, and serving others by volunteering for a year as a science teacher in South America, where she taught 8th through 11th grade and organized the school’s first science fair.
Armed with extreme curiosity and a never-ending thirst to develop as an individual, Anthony stumbled upon the world of analytics. Beginning with his love of puzzles at age four, he exuded a knack for quantitative thinking and strategic problem solving, which he would sharpen throughout his academic career.

After completing a successful hockey career at Brown University where he won both the prestigious First Team Academic All-Ivy and the Class of 1936 awards, Anthony was fortunate enough to receive his first pro contract. After playing domestically, Anthony took his talents overseas where he played in Italy for two seasons. When he finished playing hockey, Anthony moved into banking.

Possessing an economics background, Anthony gained a position within M&T Bank’s Centralized Modeling Group as an analyst. It was here he first saw the power of real-world analytics and fell in love. Anthony provided detailed and concise analysis to help the team construct a Monte Carlo simulation and meet the deadline for CCAR submission. He also built his own net charge-off model forecasting the bank’s losses and presented his outcomes to the Credit Risk department. He gained a valuable understanding of how to thrive in a fast-paced team environment and segue analytical insights into actionable measures. Anthony is eager to use his professional experiences and business acumen to flourish at his next opportunity.

When Anthony is not learning about the ever-expanding world of analytics, he can be found hopelessly cheering on his Buffalo Bills to make the playoffs again. He enjoys staying active by playing tennis and working out. Anthony is also a passionate chef and enjoys a fine Napa red.
Roy Bowman

Hometown: Stewartstown, Pennsylvania
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  M.S., Chemistry, 2005
- Drexel University
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2014
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2015
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Roy embodies the philosophy that innovation occurs at the interface of disciplines. He understands how to reach across boundaries, communicate innovative ideas, and influence decision makers for the benefit of the team and organization. These skills were evidenced by his role in helping to create a new department focused on applying analytic methods to pharmaceutical development at GlaxoSmithKline. This required collaboration with and support from everyone from bench scientists to the CEO and confidence in presenting in venues from auditoriums to board rooms.

As a strategic thinker, he is able to identify and assemble disparate components to achieve a vision. Roy’s creativity, agile learning, and strong communication skills are the strengths he brings to a team. An organic chemist by training, Roy applied statistics to process optimization of chemical transformations. This interest in analytic methods led to the use of principal component analysis and machine learning techniques to develop new catalysts for organic synthesis of new medicines. For these efforts Roy won a GlaxoSmithKline Exceptional Science Award.

Roy has engaged in a variety of sports from yoga to boxing to skeet shooting and currently stays active by running. Stamps from Russia, Sweden, Canada, Italy, Japan, and Mexico fill his passport, and he hopes one day to visit Antarctica. Roy is a fan of NFL football, specifically the Philadelphia Eagles. He also loves fantasy football, which can turn Sundays into a rollercoaster of emotion.
As the recipient of the 2016 Peach of an Athlete Role Model Award, Sylvie has always been a standout both on and off the golf course. Throughout her career on the UGA women’s golf team, Sylvie’s grace, accomplishment, and leadership served as an inspiration to her teammates and beyond. Arriving on campus, Sylvie quickly realized the enormous responsibility and demand upon her time that comes with competitive golf at such a high level. To be as efficient as possible, Sylvie turned to analytics. She put her education to work, optimizing her practice and study schedules. Collecting on and off course stats, from driving distance and club selection to performance on drills, Sylvie analyzed every aspect of her game. This in-depth analysis led her to maximize her practice time and her studies, fine-tuning both her play and her academic career. Sylvie credits analytics for her success in all aspects of her life as a student athlete.

Off the course, Sylvie served as Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) President. Her vision and drive led SAAC to accomplish many firsts. She produced a ‘No More’ PSA aimed at stopping sexual assault and domestic violence that aired at a home football game in front of over 90,000 people, as well as pioneered ‘Student Athlete Mental Health Week.’ Under Sylvie’s leadership, SAAC provided UGA athletes with opportunities for extra-curricular education and stress management, lifting the organization to new heights and prominence.

As the SEC Brad Davis Community Service Post-Graduate Scholarship recipient, Sylvie understands the importance of both education and giving back. In her free time Sylvie volunteers with Girls Who Code, an organization dedicated to teaching girls computer science fundamentals.
Arkadiusz Bryja

Hometown:  Chicago, Illinois
Citizenship:  U.S. and Poland

EDUCATION

- University of Illinois at Chicago
  B.A., summa cum laude, with High Distinction in Applied Psychology;
  Anthropology, 2014

- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Growing up in Poland, Arkadiusz’s favorite pastime was following his favorite music
countdowns on the radio or TV. He would vote for his favorite artists daily and
would track their performance over time. Being exposed to music from all over the
world in different languages, Arkadiusz became interested in different cultures.
Combining his interests in culture and human behavior, he pursued a degree in
Anthropology and Psychology at one of the most diverse universities in the country.
During his undergraduate career, learning statistics and working on multiple
research projects sparked his interest in analytics.

After graduating, Arkadiusz worked as a business analyst at Travelzoo where he
combined his knowledge of statistics with creativity to revise old reports and create
new ones. Furthermore, his analyses yielded valuable insights for his department
and led to some impressive results in customer experience. For instance, the
outcomes of his analyses increased customer satisfaction scores in the call center by
eight points in a period of eight months.

In his free time, Arkadiusz loves discovering new music that he can add to his
playlists, participating in fitness classes, and learning about new cultures. In recent
years, he’s been actively learning about Japanese culture by listening to Japanese
music and learning the language. In a couple of years, he hopes to travel to Japan
and explore the streets of Harajuku while comfortably conversing with the locals.
Marina’s interest in analytics grew out of a passion for psychology and understanding the nuances of human behavior. Discovering patterns in psychotherapy narratives, for her undergraduate thesis, sparked an interest in the power of data to uncover unique insights. This ongoing curiosity led her to analyze audience behavior for media companies at Latitude Research (a boutique market research firm) and conduct research on teamwork and decision-making at Harvard Business School.

As a senior analyst at Latitude, Marina combined qualitative and quantitative research to uncover strategic insights for media companies such as The New York Times, DIRECTV, and Viacom. She relished the opportunity to provide clients with better insight into the motivations behind their customers’ behavior. Working at a small firm immersed her in all aspects of the project lifecycle and, in less than a year, she was independently conducting projects and managing client relationships.

Marina broadened her analytical experience as a research associate at Harvard Business School by exploring a broad range of topics including teamwork, consumer behavior, and behavioral economics. She enjoyed using experimental research and data analysis to investigate complex questions, and proactively honed her analytical skills by independently learning new programming languages, including STATA, and statistical techniques such as multi-level modeling and ANCOVA.

When not working with data, Marina enjoys doing genealogical research to uncover her family tree and Eastern European roots. She can also be found exploring walking trails with her husband or listening to the latest episode of This American Life.
Emily Burnett

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Rice University
  Phi Beta Kappa

- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Emily’s friends used to tease her in high school because she actually got excited for math tests. During these years, she also spent time tutoring her classmates in pre-calculus. These experiences led her to discover her passion for numbers and choose a major in statistics. However, she added minors in both business and sociology when she realized that she also liked learning about people and their various perspectives. Emily is pursuing a career in analytics because it seamlessly integrates skills from those divergent interests.

Throughout her undergraduate career, Emily enjoyed applying statistics to a wide variety of problems that affect people’s lives. Her favorite class, The Sociology of Houston, used statistical techniques to draw insights from the Kinder Houston Area Survey, which has been measuring trends in Houstonians’ opinions and demographics for the last 35 years. Similarly, she enjoyed her first taste of big data in an undergraduate machine learning course with Dr. Genevera Allen, who gave Emily the opportunity to join her research team the following semester. There, in collaboration with the Texas Medical Center, Emily built models pertaining to Alzheimer’s prevention.

Emily lived in Texas her entire life prior to beginning the MSA program; so, naturally, she loves Mexican food and the San Antonio Spurs. For over 16 years, she has been pursuing her passion for ballet. She loves not only the challenge and detailed work involved in improving one’s technique, but also the creativity of choreography and performance. Emily is excited to apply these same techniques to future problem-solving.
Diverse experiences during his undergraduate studies honed Preston’s passions and unearthed his calling to analytics. In his classes, he was continuously exposed to statistical tools and techniques that revealed the possibilities for bringing meaning out of overwhelming and chaotic data. In his campus ministry, his passion for team building and seeing others develop to their full potential was stimulated by experiences in small group and organizational leadership. In his work at Rho Inc., Preston expanded his flexibility while working with different teams that required him to rapidly learn new skills. His fit with the company, attention to detail, and work ethic enabled a summer internship to turn into two years of employment. It was there at Rho Inc. that he was first given the opportunity to use tools like SAS VA to explore real data for business insights and discovered the power of analytics.

Preston’s excellent stewardship of time carries over from school and work to his personal life. He spent much of his college career with the homeless — first through Community Empowerment Fund (an organization that works to alleviate poverty) and then independently. A two-month cultural exchange in India deepened his love for problem solving, teamwork, and different cultures. He has always enjoyed reading books with practical benefits, mostly concerned with personal development and business. Whether playing an instrument or participating in soccer on the weekend, Preston can always be found working hard and enjoying life.
Clare’s genuine character and interpersonal skills make her a capable and proactive leader. During high school, she could be found engaging with 725 fellow students in her roles as Senior Class President, JV Drill Team Captain, and Vice President of an accelerated program. Clare's willingness to step out of her comfort zone and accept challenging leadership responsibilities continued into her undergraduate education. Serving as a Vice President of her sorority, she worked to improve scholastic results for over 200 members by organizing career and educational workshops. Academically, she headed a capstone project and mentored students through the research process.

Healthcare has long been one of Clare's interests. She gained admittance into her high school's prestigious medical academy in which she completed six health internships before the age of 18. Declaring a public health major in college introduced her to the importance of analytics in healthcare. Combining field exposures helped Clare recognize cultural and socioeconomic issues of health. Using these experiences, she created a thesis project about the influences of cultural norms on healthcare delivery as part of a self-designed university honors certificate.

Clare has earned a reputation for her optimism and perseverance, which she credits to volunteerism and an upbringing that emphasized civic duty and respect for others. A few examples of her national and international outreach endeavors include rebuilding local communities in Louisiana and Mexico, as well as providing Spanish language translation at remote clinics in Nicaragua. Diverse service opportunities have developed Clare’s outlook for seeing opportunity in every difficulty — a perspective she plans to carry to the workforce and throughout life.
Because Catherine seeks out complex and unexplored questions that have broader impacts, she has developed an interest in analytics. As a chemistry graduate student, she researched solar fuel cells as a renewable energy source by delving into theoretical concepts. However, Catherine’s favorite part of the investigative process was modeling experimental data to compare various materials used for solar energy applications. She continued her career as an analytical chemist at a contract research lab for pharmaceutical products where she measured product purity and drug release rates. When performing these experiments, she found herself doing calculations outside of her job description to investigate the drug development progress and extrapolate inconspicuous details. She finally realized just how much she valued quantitative information and enjoyed looking for trends in data.

Aside from developing and performing experiments, Catherine also served as a teaching assistant for general chemistry lab courses at UNC. This leadership position provided an opportunity to hone presentation and communication skills while explaining concepts to a non-technical audience. Reflecting on her research experiences in both academic and industrial settings, it became obvious that her interests aligned with becoming an analytics professional.

Even her hobbies indicate an interest in analytics. As a collegiate cross-country and track athlete, Catherine craved numbers. From elevation gain to heart rate, she used these metrics to track her performance and progress. She still enjoys running and plans to attempt the Krispy Kreme Challenge (a five-mile run that includes eating a dozen doughnuts) to feed her competitive drive. Outside of running, Catherine enjoys reading historical fiction.
In February 2016, Will found himself at Super Bowl 50 media day surrounded by professional football players and celebrities —such as Rob Gronkowski, Miss America, and Bret Favre. Will was at the event to be interviewed for both radio and television about the statistical model he created to predict NFL plays. It was an experience that he will never forget and was only made possible through his passion for analytics.

Will discovered analytics during his junior year of college while he was working at a manufacturing facility in the quaint town of Cheraw, SC. With extra time on his hands, Will began pursuing interests in subjects outside of the scope of his curriculum. It was then that he stumbled upon Coursera. That night, he signed up for the Stanford Machine Learning course and Johns Hopkins Data Science track to dive headfirst into the field of analytics. He was quickly hooked and spent the remainder of the semester learning and applying new analytical techniques. Upon his return to school, Will added a statistics minor and joined all of NC State University’s analytics clubs.

In his free time, Will enjoys spending time with friends and playing tennis. He volunteers at a local Boys & Girls club where he teaches an introductory coding class. Last summer, he completed his first IRONMAN 70.3 and is currently taking suggestions for his next endeavor.
Michael Byman

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Emory University
  B.B.A., with Distinction, Business Administration, 2015
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Michael would best be described as a closet-nerd with hand-eye coordination. From a young age, he began to take interest in two things — numbers and baseball. He showed a talent for mathematics in elementary school and even sorted his extensive collection of baseball cards by the statistics on the back, instead of by the player’s name or team on the front. He also began to recognize his athletic ability early on, stemming from a long line of professional athletes in his family.

In college, these two passions fed off one another. Michael enjoyed a successful career as a pitcher on the Emory University baseball team while simultaneously becoming immersed in the numbers behind the game. As baseball data became increasingly more complex, so too did Michael’s interest in and knowledge of data management tools and statistical techniques to conquer that data. Prior to his senior year, Michael was awarded a grant to support his original sports analytics research.

As he advanced in his undergraduate education, Michael began to realize that he enjoyed leveraging the skills developed through his baseball analyses to tackle business problems. As an analyst for a Raleigh-based venture capital firm, he created a market comparison database and analyzed the value of the firm’s portfolio companies. At a start-up company in Atlanta, founded to protect the interests of student athletes, Michael created a database of information on tens of thousands of college athletes and teams.

Along with his interest in analytics, Michael developed a passion for cooking through weekends spent with his grandmother, a professional chef for over 30 years.
Introduced to the game of chess when he was nine years old, Rocky built the skills to analyze, forecast, and compete at an early age. Rocky defeated his opposition by thinking multiple moves ahead and calculating all the possible variations of strategies within each position. To challenge players around the world, he progressed to playing online bullet chess, a type of chess in which each player is allotted a 60-second time limit per match. Rocky excelled in this fast-paced game type, defeating multiple Grandmasters (the highest obtainable title for a chess player).

After completing his undergraduate studies in Business Administration and Economics, Rocky started his career in the International Finance Group at Wells Fargo Bank, where he was first exposed to SQL coding. His fascination with coding and data inspired him to enroll in a statistical programming distance learning course at North Carolina State University. During the course, Rocky recognized his passion for delving into vast amounts of data and programming code to quantify unrevealed statistics. This inspired Rocky to pursue a career in advanced analytics.

Rocky is a diehard fan of the Carolina Panthers, Charlotte Hornets, and North Carolina Tar Heels. He stays active through football, basketball, and mountain biking. However, during his down time, Rocky enjoys practicing his culinary skills by cooking recipes handed down from his mother and grandmother. He also combines his passion for football and analytics in fantasy football leagues. Rocky looks forward to continuing to unite his various pursuits with his love for analytics.
As a child, Caroline dreamed of being a dancer and eventually owning a dance studio. She pursued her dream by becoming a dance teacher and an office assistant at a local dance studio for the first half of her college career. While using a CRM system, DanceWorks, she became interested in learning more about information systems. This led her to take an information systems course, which exposed her to computer applications to support decision-making, data analysis, and data management.

After learning the basics, Caroline furthered her knowledge by taking computer programming courses and providing technical support at UNCW's Technology Assistance Center. She quickly outgrew her role there and began looking for an avenue to match her needs for a creative and stimulating endeavor. After speaking with her advisor, she decided to focus on the analytics field which connected both of her business concentrations — marketing strategy and information systems.

Caroline taught herself Adobe Creative Cloud, HTML/CSS, and Google Analytics. She subsequently put these skills to use at an internship at Coastal Surgery Specialists; where, after utilizing Google Analytics and finding an increasing percentage of mobile users, she rebuilt their website to include responsive design. Caroline interned at SAS during the summer after her junior year of college where she explored the field of marketing analytics (a field that combined her two passions).

Caroline wakes up at 5:10AM every day to run and strength train, which leaves her feeling energetic and enthusiastic for the remainder of the day. In her spare time, Caroline enjoys snow-skiing, hiking, and traveling to new places and old favorites.
Shoshana’s first academic love was literature. Her fascination with language, imagery, and puzzle-solving led her to study the history of revolutions and popular movements through the prism of storytelling and popular culture. Her senior thesis analyzed recurring themes in Soviet political jokes and the unforeseen impact of dissident humor on the collapse of the Soviet system — an early, analog effort in text mining and “social media” analysis.

As a freelance writer and researcher, Shoshana thrived on the invigorating process of finding workable solutions to practical quandaries in a wide variety of industries, from life insurance to education to SaaS. She partnered with a software engineer to develop a property management application suite and several iPhone apps, cultivating an enthusiasm for technical problem-solving approaches like Agile and object-oriented design. But it wasn’t until Shoshana took a full-time position as a research analyst for a commercial real estate company that she discovered the field of analytics as the ultimate synergy of stories, puzzles, and real-world connection. With a natural facility for logic and robust quantitative skills, she bootstrapped her way from an entry-level position to lead Cushman & Wakefield’s research operations in the Triangle. Her rent forecasts and market analyses informed multimillion-dollar business decisions, and were picked up for attribution by industry-focused journals and independent research organizations.

When she isn’t wrangling data, Shoshana is still most likely to be found immersed in a book and lost to the world. A “third culture kid” who traveled extensively with her nomadic parents, she remains deeply committed to international development, global community, and human uplift.
During his junior year, with eyes set firmly on landing an accounting internship and then a career with a “Big Four” accounting firm, Conner chose to use a free elective credit to take a data mining course out of curiosity. By the end of the course, Conner’s future goal switched from obtaining that accounting internship to obtaining a Master’s of Science in Analytics degree.

Ambitious by nature and intrigued with analytics, Conner took over as CEO of a student-run market research and statistical analysis firm. During his time as CEO, he managed a team of five employees and up to six client relationships simultaneously. Through satisfying clients’ needs and goals, Conner’s team created and delivered surveys, reports, and presentations while achieving a profit margin of over 55%.

In order to ensure future success of the firm prior to his graduation, Conner focused the firm’s business model and segregated duties to maximize operational efficiency while also choosing and training a successor. Through this leadership experience, Conner became increasingly aware of an analytics presence merging into the world of business. This fueled his interest and solidified his decision to pursue a career in analytics.

Entrepreneurial endeavors are not the only things that interest Conner. After taking a cooking class in Florence, Italy, Conner found that time in front of a stove can be refreshing. He is also known to frequent Lake Granbury in Texas for peaceful days kayaking, boating, or playing golf with family and friends.
From programming grocery lists using Poisson probability distribution to calculating the probability of finding the elevator right on her floor, Cecilia has always had a special interest in quantifying the world around her. It was her high school math teacher who, seeing her aptitude and curiosity towards numbers, introduced her to the world of statistics. Through the course of the five-year Bachelor’s program she developed keen analytical and reasoning skills in addition to a strong conceptual understanding of the science.

After she earned her undergraduate degree in statistics, her explanatory data analysis professor contacted her to offer her a job at DIRECTV, where she was introduced to the field of big data analytics. As part of a data scientist team, she developed predictive models that played an enormous role in the company's finance strategy — calculating the probabilities that a potential customer was a risky acquisition and quantifying the monetary value of each customer. Cecilia also analyzed the key factors that correlate with customer satisfaction, culminating in the implementation of a plan to better assign company resources.

Her time at DIRECTV, together with her innate curiosity, increased her appetite for knowledge in the field of big data and compelled her to apply to the Argentine Presidential Fellowship in Science and Technology, a prestigious government-funded scholarship program administered by Fulbright. This program offers scholarships to pursue master's degree programs in the STEM fields in various countries. Being a 2016 recipient of this award brought Cecilia to the US, where, living 5,000 miles away from her country, she creates her own sense of home by sharing traditional Argentinian dishes with her classmates and exploring her new whereabouts on her bike.
Alex was introduced to the power of analytics through the world of finance. At a small financial startup, AdvisorShares, he was part of the initiative to create the company's first-ever database. Alex collected data from the Outlook inboxes of the marketing, sales, and operations departments and combined it in a central location. Intelligent, inquisitive, and hardworking, he was quick to learn the difficulties of converting data from multiple sources into useable intelligence. Reporting that usually had a lag of a few days or weeks was now available within minutes. Alex saw firsthand the power of data as the company now had a better sense of the competitive market in real time.

In college, Alex proved to be a leader among the top business students in his class. He was recommended by the faculty to receive the Jennifer Tino Memorial Scholarship for showing leadership in and out of the classroom. Alex was given the opportunity to present his bankruptcy research at the Southwestern Sociological Science Association’s annual conference in San Antonio, TX. He explained and defended his findings on bankruptcy indicators in the automotive industry that were apparent years before the Great Recession.

When Alex is not diving into the world of analytics, he enjoys running half marathons, camping in the Appalachian Mountains, drinking French press coffee, and spending time with his wife, son, and daughter.
Kevin Danchisko

Hometown: Arlington, Virginia
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of Notre Dame
  B.A., cum laude, Honors Anthropology with minor in Science, Technology and Values, 2011
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

From experiences sorting giant deer mouse bones at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History to leading tours at the Benjamin Franklin House in London, Kevin developed a passion for communicating his findings to others.

Kevin translated this intellectual curiosity to the field of qualitative research and consulting. At the Education Advisory Board, Kevin conducted in-depth literature reviews and interviews with thought leaders to identify best practices for higher education executives. For two years, Kevin supported CIOs with the tactical and strategic challenges of implementing analytics teams at their universities. This work inspired him to become not just a researcher of analytics, but a practitioner in the field.

Kevin quickly learned how to navigate sensitive and challenging conversations with C-suite executives and how to synthesize his findings within the broader context of complex organizations. Having worked for administrators with limited time, Kevin is practiced in producing clear, concise, and audience-appropriate reports and briefs. His thoughtful approach to his work, generosity towards his colleagues, and commitment to constant improvement for himself and others makes him an excellent leader and team member.

Kevin recently completed a lifelong dream, traveling to Iceland to see puffins in the wild. He is a diehard Fighting Irish fan, even taking wedding pictures inside Notre Dame Stadium. Kevin enjoys staying active and is always up for a pickup soccer or basketball game.
Being a runner is a large part of Thomas’ identity. He enjoys using each run as a chance to improve upon past performances, focusing on the separate elements that contribute to a successful race. His passion and hard work earned him a spot on Division 1 cross country and track teams, where he was voted captain his senior year. Thomas continues to challenge himself by running ultramarathons, which push his mind and body to their limits. His success in running can be attributed to his excitement to learn, a positive mindset, and the determination to embrace challenges.

In elementary school, Thomas requested math problems from his parents before being tucked into bed. Despite this early love of math and puzzles, Thomas didn’t discover his true passion for analytics until he took a statistical consulting class in college. This class fueled his intrigue for working with data and discovering new insights. He worked with a group of fellow students, the self-labeled “StatCats,” to shape decisions for veterinarians, biologists, and professors. Using statistical methods, the StatCats helped these professionals better understand their data, allowing them to improve their daily endeavors. Thomas was especially excited when his group figured out a way to shorten the stay for animals at a veterinary hospital.

When Thomas is not running a trail at Umstead Park, he can often be found playing tennis, soccer, or ultimate Frisbee with friends. For relaxation, he likes to play strategy games, such as Settlers of Catan, while enjoying Belgian style beers and jamming out to the soundtrack of “Hamilton, an American Musical.”
By the age of 18, Raj had already lived in India, Curaçao, Gibraltar, and St. Thomas in the US Virgin Islands. He finally settled in Cary, NC, which he now calls home. Relocating during his formative years developed his ability to adapt to new situations and social circles. This experience guided him through his career journey — from a jewelry salesperson in St. Thomas to a software engineer, project manager, product manager, business operations manager, and co-founder of a startup.

Raj is recognized for his ability to clearly articulate the business value of technical initiatives. Leveraging this skill made him a successful product manager working at a startup that delivered Hadoop services and sold a data management product for big data. He engaged various levels of management in large enterprises to demonstrate the value of having a managed data platform. Recognizing the market need for effective communicators, Raj decided to fully commit to the field of data analytics, as it was a natural extension of his current skills.

In his spare time, Raj enjoys a calming routine of yoga — either at the gym or at home with his two young boys. Recently, he and his 11-year old son have been learning Python programming together and discussing concepts in Star Trek: The Next Generation.
Julia has always encountered analytics in unexpected places. In her sophomore linguistics class, she gained her first exposure to analytics in a non-traditional way by searching for changes in phonemes over time. Julia continued to find patterns when she studied abroad in France, where she compared grammatical structures across multiple languages in order to better aid her comprehension. As she concluded her undergraduate career, Julia mastered more traditional methods of analysis in her statistics classes that complemented her qualitative observations and inquisitive nature.

After her junior year, Julia cemented her love of analytics through her role as a data analyst intern in the finance department at Bai Brands, a rapidly growing beverage company. She collected and analyzed more than 20,000 lines of geographic, financial, and sales data using Excel macros and pivot tables to provide recommendations for the upcoming year to the CFO. Julia continued her interest in analytics her senior year when she used regression analysis to determine the importance of test scores in college admissions. To supplement her education, Julia sought out ways to get involved in analytics in her community by attending the UNC Basketball Analytics Summit, where she learned the latest statistical methods used in the NBA.

Julia also possesses a passion for public service. At UNC, she was recognized as a Buckley Public Service Scholar for donating more than 300 hours of her time as an adapted aquatics instructor, an elementary classroom assistant, and an English tutor. In addition to volunteering, Julia enjoys scuba diving, swimming laps, and cheering on the Tar Heels.
Mary Jessie Densmore

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Wilmington
  B.S., magna cum laude, Business Administration, 2016
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2017

Mary Jessie discovered her passion for analytics in college while working as a swim coach for Carolina Country Club. Not only was she responsible for leading a team of over 100 swimmers, but she created the lineup for the championship meet as well. After spending days analyzing the data collected over the entire season, Mary Jessie finalized a line-up that ultimately led to a championship victory.

While pursuing her economics degree, Mary Jessie worked alongside Dr. Schuhmann on a study of tourists’ willingness to pay conservation fees for the preservation of coral reefs in Barbados. It was during these six months that Mary Jessie realized just how impactful data can be. By doing a logistic regression analysis, she learned that statistics has the power to help save coral reefs, a matter very dear to her heart after personally experiencing the degradation of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Spending six months in Australia sparked her interest for international travel, which is why Mary Jessie was elated when she was selected to join a team of students in completing a financial consulting project for a client in Prague, Czech Republic. Through this endeavor, she was able to apply her analytical skills in a global context. Mary Jessie learned to embrace new cultures and diversity while spending time abroad on four different continents. Her teammates say that she has the ability to get along with everyone, is organized, and has a strong work ethic.

Outside of work, Mary Jessie likes traveling the world in search of new places to scuba dive, exploring new Thai restaurants around Raleigh, or watching re-runs of Friends.
Scott was first introduced to the world of sports analytics after receiving a Division I college hockey scholarship to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. At such an elite level of the sport, players looked to exploit any weakness or strength. After reviewing the video of each game, Scott broke down every possible factor leading to the goals against him and developed a plan of action to become a superior goaltender. This simplified process of continuous improvement through data collection, analysis, and implementation are the tools that led Scott to the captivating domain of analytics.

During the offseason, Scott worked as a project management intern at the Buffalo Bills Stadium. This experience facilitated his translation of teamwork and leadership skills from the ice to a $130 million construction project. His capacity to be an effective team member under intense pressure flourished further during his experience as a professional hockey player. Scott took his vast teamwork experience to his first job in analytics at First Niagara Bank’s Credit Risk department. There, he learned that data analysts were at the very core of ensuring the financial stability of a bank. Within months, Scott was personally tasked with running the Indirect Auto models for the annual stress testing as well as providing comprehensive documentation on the performance of the models.

In his free time, Scott enjoys attending sporting events such as baseball and hockey games. Also, he recently became a fan of Formula One racing and plans on attending the race in Montréal, Canada next year.
Most people ‘Go Greek’ to find friends in college, but recruitment actually led Emily to analytics. As a freshman, Emily accepted a bid to the Epsilon Nu chapter of Phi Mu. Just after her sophomore year, the chapter president unexpectedly resigned and Emily assumed the role, leaving her with only one month to learn how to run a chapter. Thus began her rapid education and love affair with the recruitment process, which she would go on to lead.

Emily’s first foray into big data came from organizing multifaceted information on 941 potential new sorority members. Her grace under pressure, cheerful demeanor, and familiarity with Excel led to a streamlined, behind-the-scenes process as internal membership chair. She also promoted a culture of transparency around the position, creating key timelines and detailed notes for her successors. Marked improvement in the chapter’s performance metrics and high member morale throughout the week reflected the strength of Emily’s leadership abilities. Under her leadership, Phi Mu ended recruitment above chapter total with a carefully crafted bid list of high-achieving new members. Even after graduation, Emily kept in contact with the current recruitment team, offering emotional and technical support. She continues to take great pride in motivating her chapter to work harder and recruit higher.

In between sleep and analytics, Emily enjoys perfecting her crowd-favorite mint double chocolate chip cookie recipe, managing a wood-burning craft business, and applying the principles of game theory to get out of doing the dishes.
Kelvin Espinal

Hometown: Peabody, Massachusetts
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- United States Military Academy at West Point
  B.S., Operations Research, 2009
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Kelvin is a natural leader and has a profound passion for helping people become a better version of themselves through coaching, training, and mentorship. From playing football at the collegiate Division I level to leading soldiers in combat, Kelvin has had the unique opportunity to lead very diverse teams. Kelvin’s time in the US Army has not only developed his ability to critically think and solve difficult problems, but it has also taught him how to build highly successful teams through trust, integrity, and strong relationships.

While serving in Afghanistan, Kelvin’s curiosity and desire to make better decisions prompted him to utilize basic tools, such as Excel and topographic maps, to analytically and visually examine potential threats from improvised explosive devices (IEDs). His analysis, combined with his team’s ability to perform at a high level, led to numerous IEDs being removed from roadways and several lives being saved. Upon exiting the military, Kelvin’s interest and willingness to make more effective decisions continued to influence his career in the supply chain industry — where scorecards and key performance indicators were a regular part of his day. His desire to dig deeper into the data and provide more meaningful action plans ultimately drove him to pursue a degree in analytics.

In his free time, Kelvin enjoys learning about other cultures and gaining new perspectives through extensive traveling. He has visited over 15 counties and particularly enjoys Prague due to its beautiful architecture, cultural diversity, and refreshing Pilsner beer. Kelvin also enjoys cycling in his free time because it provides him with an outlet to reflect upon his day, while improving his fitness in a team environment.
Vince Lombardi once said, “Football is a great deal like life.” It tests those who play, and in order to succeed, one must have drive, focus, and a competitive nature. For five years Carson gave football his heart and soul; however, at age 20, with his body beset by injuries, he stepped away from the game he loved and shifted his focus to academics. He found a new passion in his studies and carried with him many invaluable lessons learned on the football field.

Growing up, Carson excelled in school. He was placed in academically gifted courses and never struggled to earn high marks. Although he was smart, he preferred the rigor of sports. Not the strongest or fastest, he had to rely on grit and determination to outmatch his opponents. When he hung up his cleats, Carson adopted the same mentality in the classroom. He chose a course of study that would test his limits. Three years (and countless library hours) later, he was selected to attend the American Economic Association Summer Training Program and given the distinction of Campbell University’s Outstanding Senior in Economics. Passionate to learn more, he chose the Institute for Advanced Analytics to grow as a leader and place himself on the cutting edge of an emerging field.

When he’s not studying, Carson enjoys spending quality time with his friends and family, including his mammoth Newfoundland dogs, Toby and Gracie. On Sundays, you can find him rooting for his beloved Seattle Seahawks, but he’s most content getting outdoors and exploring new places.
From mining coal to mining data, Nimish has always loved to solve practical problems. Being exposed to the colossal mining sector, while growing up around rural Australia, led Nimish to naturally pursue an undergraduate degree in Mining Engineering.

During his degree, however, Nimish preferred critical thinking and problem-solving over learning technical knowledge and felt there was more to explore in the problem-solving realm. His interest, passion, and work ethic transitioned into an internship in a mining company where he was introduced to data analytics.

Feeling energized from the power data analytics has, Nimish was determined to pursue data analysis further and this dedication landed him an internship at a consulting firm. There, he played a major role in analyzing projects spanning across eight countries. Nimish also worked with the Australian government on demand analysis for the world’s largest coal port terminal and worked on commodity analysis for market forecasting. The internship cemented his desire to understand data analysis and confirmed that this was the right path for him. His innate curiosity for analysis and drive to make impactful business solutions motivated Nimish to pursue data analysis at the Institute for Advanced Analytics.

Outside of the analytics realm, Nimish can be found in the rainforests hiking trails, in the kitchen cooking Asian cuisine, or in the local coffee shop planning a weekend getaway. Being an avid and restless traveler, he has visited 20 different countries across four continents with his favorites being New Zealand, Germany, Austria, and China.
Possessing a keen interest in predicting human behavior, Kimberly knew at an early age that she wanted a career where problem solving took center stage. Her fascination with forensic profiling led her to study psychology and enlist in the US Army Reserves as a Mental Health Specialist. Desiring an opportunity to sharpen her leadership skills, while solving challenging problems in a real-world context, Kimberly became an Army Intelligence Officer.

As an Intelligence Officer, Kimberly learned how to translate complex data schemas into simple narratives for military decision makers. Fascinated by the utility and practicality of data, she sought out a position with the Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center where she managed a large-scale data repository. Here, Kimberly gained a deeper understanding of the data cycle and its uses for informing policy and best practices.

Her intellectual curiosity and "can do" attitude won the attention of a senior clinical scientist at Duke University who invited her to pursue a National Institutes of Health supplement alongside receiving mentorship in data research. During her tenure, Kimberly immersed herself in every analytic opportunity available and leveraged her experience and data access to complete a doctoral degree, while authoring several peer-reviewed scientific publications.

Kimberly's eye for detail has also fueled a passion for woodworking; one day, she hopes to design and build a cabin in the mountains of western North Carolina. Also, she recently became certified in scuba diving during a vacation to Jamaica.
Colby Greene

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- East Carolina University
  B.S., Mathematics, 2014
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

From fierce board game competitions as a child to competing on the baseball diamond, Colby has always enjoyed seeking out different ways to gain an edge over his competition. Throughout his life he has been driven to succeed by two passions — problem solving and leadership. However, even as a mathematics major in undergrad, it wasn’t until a summer internship at Lowe’s Home Improvement (investigating search behavior of app users) that he knew he wanted to pursue a career in analytics.

After graduation, a desire to innovate led to an internship and eventual full-time employment at a local startup company, Reveal Mobile. During his time at Reveal, Colby used his problem-solving skills to create unique solutions to business problems and set up data exchanges with other companies, all while creating the world’s first beacon-powered mobile audience database. Even as a young professional, Colby demonstrated strong leadership and business development skills working with both interns and upper management to establish and evaluate key performance indicators.

Outside of analytics, Colby enjoys competing in intramural team sports, scouring the state of North Carolina for the best barbecue, or grabbing a beer at one of the local Raleigh breweries. On weekends, he enjoys cheering on the Wolfpack basketball and baseball teams — when they aren’t playing the Pirates!
When most people think of a tough day at work, it usually doesn't involve being chased by a grizzly bear. However, it wasn't a fear of bears that led Will out of the woods and into analytics — it was his passion for teamwork and collaborative problem solving. Growing up in a small town and joining the Boy Scouts early, Will was raised to always put the team first. Later work experience in several different fields cemented his passion for teamwork, whether it was problem solving in the field or collaborating with diverse stakeholders.

Across all of those teams, Will's most consistent contribution was his ability to communicate. As an undergrad, he led his team to win the annual student poster session in his department and, in graduate school, he presented at multiple conferences and seminars. Those experiences steered Will to a job as a fishing guide in Alaska where he could share his knowledge daily. In Alaska, he received several five-star reviews and was known for his ability to teach young or inexperienced fishermen and women between the ages of seven and 70. When Will heard about the MSA program at NC State University, the opportunity to solve business problems and communicate solutions as part of an expert team caught his attention.

Still an outdoorsman at heart, Will enjoys escaping into nature and teaching others how to fly-fish or hunt. Currently, Will is trying to catch a fish in all 50 states; he only has 35 more to go.
Throughout Nicole’s career she’s developed a reputation for turning around challenging projects. When she joined Ogilvy, the first website project she was assigned had been going for nine months and was already behind schedule and over budget. The client was understandably unhappy while the team felt overworked and underappreciated. To get the project back on track, Nicole drew from her Lockheed Martin experience as a certified Six Sigma Green Belt. She led a joint root cause analysis that built trust with the team and client. As a result, they determined scope creep had drifted the project off course. Nicole reset expectations, and with her revised agile development approach, the product launched one month later. That project is now the largest restaurant reservation website in Australia.

Nicole went on to formalize a process that proactively identified and tracked agency-wide project risk metrics that she reviewed with the CEO and COO, weekly. Recognized for her aptitude and interest in data analysis, Nicole applied her root cause investigative approach beyond internal operations to her client’s projects. She used Google Analytics to explore customer drop-off on a bank’s community site then advocated user-experience optimizations; the relevance algorithm she proposed ultimately increased site engagement by 47%. Devoted to the Six Sigma continuous improvement philosophy and motivated by the potentially significant business efficiencies and end-user impacts achievable, Nicole resolved to specialize in advanced analytics.

In her quest for new and unusual experiences, Nicole’s five-star thrill-seeking most recently included the running of the bulls in Spain, waltzing at a costumed ball for Carnevale in Venice, and glamping in the Sahara Desert.
Grace Heyne

Hometown:  Charleston, South Carolina
Citizenship:  U.S.

EDUCATION

- Clemson University
  B.S., *magna cum laude*, General and Departmental Honors in Economics with minor in Mathematical Sciences, 2015
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Grace embraces life with an infectious enthusiasm and authentic desire to understand and improve the world around her. She quickly realized that she couldn't learn everything she needed to in a classroom so she dove into the workforce, striving to absorb everything she could. Working 10 jobs before graduating from college, Grace learned that what she enjoyed doing and what she was good at had a strong correlation. Specifically, her sincere curiosity allowed her to think, learn about, and strategically solve a variety of problems. Over time, her zeal for problem solving grew and reached a pinnacle during her internship as a strategy analyst, creating a staffing forecast for a call center. She loved this work and knew she wanted a career as a professional problem solver.

From the start, Grace thrived in her career as a data analyst, bringing an enthusiasm and authenticity that always made her a valued member of any team. Grace consistently found ways to learn from those around her, such as founding a book club for young professionals and senior executives to understand their keys to success. Her list of successful projects grew, along with the number of stakeholders. It's with those stakeholders that she truly began to shine. She was gifted at and enjoyed simplifying complex problems and solutions in ways that could be understood and, then applied, to bring value.

Grace's enthusiasm shines through in everything she does. From cheering on her kickball team and planning her next National Park adventure, to rooting on her Clemson Tigers, she's always fully invested in maximizing enjoyment for herself and those around her.
Laura Hiciano

Hometown: Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Citizenship: Dominican Republic

EDUCATION

- Instituto Tecnologico de Santo Domingo
  Bachelor, *magna cum laude*, Mathematics, 2014
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

What is the better way to do a particular task? How could you improve procedures? How and why do things work? These are the questions that motivated Laura to study analytics. She is most passionate about learning from the experiences of others, particularly those who have made significant societal contributions through small or simple actions. Laura saw how these “simple” actions, using analytics, could make a huge impact in the way in which we view and solve problems.

By working in the largest commercial bank in the Dominican Republic, she improved her analytical knowledge by gaining experience in segmentation analysis and drafting financial reports. She helped provide insight by classifying customers for marketing efforts and providing useful and actionable information to help improve the overall performance of the company. This experience helped Laura to earn the Fulbright scholarship in order to develop expertise at the graduate level.

Whether relaxing at home, dining at a restaurant, climbing a mountain, or exploring nature, Laura delights in conversation and enjoys sharing knowledge. For this reason, she was a teaching assistant for calculus, numerical analysis, and environmental science while in college. She also enjoys stimulating TED Talks — they allow her to listen to scientists from around the world and discover how they turn their ideas into wonderful stories. For her the TED slogan, “Ideas Worth Spreading,” is part of her ideology and that’s what she enjoys and strives to achieve.
Jen realized her passion for numbers when she got excited for the opening of her Roth IRA while in high school. This excitement for figures and her love for problem solving led her to study topics such as operations research and actuarial sciences in her undergraduate career. However, it was impossible to solve complex or substantial problems without the use of supplementary software. This recognition led her to study computer science where she was introduced to the world of technology and found the joy of hardware and software.

Outside of the classroom, Jen sought opportunities to enhance her education. She became the first treasurer of UNC’s Women in Computer Science club and spearheaded the group’s ability to execute their fiscal goals. In addition, she tutored students in pre-calculus, introductory statistics, and programming in Java, C, and assembly. While at Fidelity Investments, she learned the basics of financing and sharpened her skills in portfolio management and retirement planning.

Jen seizes any opportunity to go scuba diving and she’s maintaining a 200-gallon coral reef ecosystem when not under sea level. Also a cooking enthusiast, she can now prepare anything from self-fermented Greek yogurt and beer to rolling sushi. Her favorite sport being volleyball, Jen frequents the courts to play with friends and coach younger players.

Jennifer Hines
Hometown:  Erie, Pennsylvania
Citizenship:  U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.S., Mathematical Decision Sciences; Computer Science, 2015
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016
At seven years old, Lisa moved from Germany to North Carolina without speaking a word of English. Eager to learn, Lisa became fluent after a few months of being immersed in the language of her classmates. This experience instilled a practice of embracing unknown challenges and learning as much as she could from others. Wanting to pursue a career in medicine, Lisa supplemented her rigorous undergraduate coursework by working closely with patients and learning from the medical team at Wrightsville Family Practice and Dermatology Associates.

It wasn’t until Lisa applied SAS to analyze manufacturing employment for her econometrics course that she was captivated by the possibilities of analytics to produce meaningful insights. The use of statistics in her biology and economics major began to pique her interest and Lisa was determined to learn more — taking extra math and statistics courses and giving up her lunch break at work to drive to campus for an additional SAS class. Lisa realized that a career in medicine was not the only way to positively impact patient lives and determined she could use analytics, on a broader scale, to improve the allocation of health care.

While volunteering as an intern at the American Red Cross, some of Lisa’s responsibilities were managing information in Excel and processing applications of prospective volunteers; as a result, the number of attendees at orientation significantly increased. Lisa enjoys donating her time, from winning the Volunteer of the Month Award at the Red Cross to doing beach sweeps to take care of the beautiful North Carolina coast.
As a member of the University of Richmond Women’s Soccer Team, Hannah spent countless hours analyzing game film. This provided her with firsthand experience studying how individual actions and group interaction both create and spoil success. Hannah’s progression into a more detailed study of the game was catalyzed by the 2014 Men’s World Cup. Watching the German team dominate the playing field and perusing articles describing their in-depth game analysis, gave Hannah her first glance into the world of analytics.

Since then, Hannah has taken every opportunity to gain experience within the ever-expanding field of analytics. The summer before her senior year in college, she spent time working for both Toronto Futbol Club and UBS. For Toronto FC she focused on roster analysis, looking at trends in historically effective Major League Soccer teams — patterns that could be associated with success. At the same time for UBS, she measured the strength of 401(k) plans, comparing the stability of specific mutual fund bundles to the volatility of the stock market.

Her interest in sports statistics influenced the topic of her honors thesis, where she studied the effect of big name, high-salary players within Major League Soccer. Hannah joined the staff of Richmond’s Athletic Department, spending time tracking player and team statistics while analyzing team performance.

When Hannah needs to clear her head of numbers, she tackles outdoor pursuits: running, biking, and kayaking, as well as spreading her soccer knowledge through a local coaching position. She has an insatiable love for reading and has enjoyed volunteering with the Reading is Fundamental program.
Alex Horowitz

Hometown: Lexington, Massachusetts
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Elon University
  - B.S., magna cum laude, Statistics with minor in Economics, 2016
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Alex’s love for traveling led her to study abroad multiple times as an undergraduate student, visiting four countries on three continents. Unique experiences such as hiking Machu Picchu Mountain, seeing a performance at the Sydney Opera House, and visiting the Western Wall fueled her passion for continuing to explore the world. Alex loves that traveling to different countries challenges her to go outside of her comfort zone. It gives her the opportunity to not only learn about other people and cultures, but also to grow as a person.

Since elementary school, math and numbers have fascinated Alex. Combined with her consistent attention to detail, her choice to major in statistics was an easy decision. Known as a reliable and hard worker, Alex was given the opportunity to perform an independent research project on the use of statistics within all undergraduate majors and departments. The project gave her the opportunity to closely work with raw data, which influenced her decision to pursue an analytics career. The experience also helped to further develop her analytical techniques and skills while allowing her to take ownership over her own project.

Outside of the classroom, Alex enjoys relaxing activities such as spending time at the beach with her family and friends, or finding a creative outlet such as intricate coloring books. She also loves spending time with her pet cats while catching up with her two favorite women’s soccer teams — the Washington Spirit and Orlando Pride.
When the stakes are high and the mission is difficult, Mike's team is always chosen for the job. On his first tour of duty in Afghanistan, serving as an Army Infantry Officer, he was selected to construct a small outpost in an austere environment to intercept enemy combatants and supplies from illegally entering the country. Due to the geographic isolation of this assignment, he was trusted to work autonomously from his unit. Years later as a commander, he fostered a culture of empowerment within his team which led to the selection of his unit to deploy to Afghanistan to advise and mentor the Afghan National Army. No matter the odds, Mike leads organizations to successfully complete their mission.

During his second deployment, Mike used a systems approach to develop a methodology to transfer coalition bases to the Afghan Army in under two weeks, reducing the previous standard by more than 50%. His technique became the model for the entire theater of operations during the US drawdown from the region. The Army Center for Lessons Learned adopted the plan and shared it with several other deployed units to assist them in successfully transferring additional bases from 2014 to 2015.

When not traveling abroad for the Army, Mike enjoys visiting national parks and landmarks around the country with his wife and their two daughters. Despite growing up on the plains of Kansas, he has developed a passion for mountains and has become an avid hiker with his family and two dogs.
Caroline Hughes

Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
  B.S., *cum laude*, Business Administration, 2015
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Caroline has developed a persistent drive, curiosity, and desire to learn throughout her life. Those character traits assisted her in her undergraduate studies as a business major at NC State University. While she found her finance, economics, and business strategy classes fascinating, it wasn’t until a semester spent studying abroad in Prague that she discovered a strong interest in computer science.

While in Prague, Caroline helped develop an iPhone application in a user experience class. Eager to incorporate the quantitative skills she learned abroad, Caroline became the analytics and technology intern at GlaxoSmithKline where the application of analytics immediately caught her attention. One significant project she was assigned to involved predicting clinical study attrition using logistic regression. From this task, she realized the immense capabilities of analytics and the positive impact it could have on a company’s growth. Following GSK, Caroline spent her free time learning R programming and researching other analytical software tools. She has eagerly merged her business knowledge with a blend of computer science and analytical skills during her time at the Institute for Advanced Analytics.

Thriving in a competitive environment, Caroline consistently sets personal and team goals. As a member of the women’s club volleyball team at NC State University and a travel volleyball team in high school, Caroline learned to especially value teamwork. Aside from exercise, she enjoys reading news articles about current events in the business world including stock market data, entrepreneurial ventures, and the use of inventive software tools within companies. She finds satisfaction in volunteering in the community and has a vast appreciation for modern art and fashion. Caroline enjoys exploring art galleries and fashion exhibitions and has found that the Louvre in Paris holds her favorite collections.
Andrea Johnston

Hometown: Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- St. Andrew's Presbyterian College
  B.S., Biology, 2007
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016

Andrea's determination and get-it-done attitude was fostered from a young age while growing up on a horse farm. She learned hard work and efficiency was the key to keeping the farm running and animals healthy. The farm taught her lessons that she has carried to all areas of life. Whether identifying ways to improve efficiency during feeding or among data monitoring teams on a clinical trial, she embraces the challenge of developing and implementing solutions to mitigate problems.

Her passion for problem solving, along with her calm demeanor, helped Andrea excel in her role as Senior Clinical Trial Lead. Upon request, she also stepped up to lead her clinical team as project manager on a diagnostic study. She utilized extensive metrics and dashboards to drive decisions and ensure quality. From brainstorming metrics and collaborating with her Biometric colleagues, she discovered the power of data and her passion for analytics was ignited. Andrea believes maintaining good morale and promoting a team environment is critical to the success of a project. Recognizing that happy employees are more productive led her to create the Funnovators. From pancake breakfasts and an annual Olympics-style competition to birthday celebrations, the Funnovators ensured that employees enjoyed being a part of their company. Additionally, she can now cook a mean pancake!

During free time, you can find Andrea at the golf course or in her sewing room, which provide a creative and physical outlet. Her (golf-related) dream is to play a round of golf at The Old Course at St. Andrews and Carnoustie Golf Links in Scotland.
Growing up on a tobacco farm, Holden learned at an early age that hard work was a way of life. This atmosphere cultivated Holden’s work ethic and helped form who he is today. Regardless of the sacrifice, he completes any task he starts to the best of his ability. The farming lifestyle also helped develop his critical thinking and problem-solving skills. When tools on the farm broke, they weren’t thrown away and replaced. Instead, they were repaired or repurposed for future use. Whether fixing damaged equipment or rebuilding engines on tractors, these hands-on experiences honed Holden’s passion for addressing and solving real-world problems.

School provided a channel for Holden to grow but, within his rural community, few people understood the value of a college education and even fewer pursued that path. Holden knew that college was necessary to reach his aspirations. During his time at East Carolina University, he discovered a passion for the business world through his curriculum. It was solidified when Holden worked on a team to help a local, small business design an information system that would automate and manage its business practices. This hands-on experience made him realize the difference he could make within a business through problem solving.

Looking forward, Holden sought a way to combine these two passions in a more concrete way. After a tour of SAS in Cary, NC, Holden knew his next step was analytics. This field perfectly melded his desire to learn, solve problems, and operate in a business environment. Even more, he’d be able to make a meaningful difference.
For the last two years, Kasey has been an influential member of a small team at Booz Allen Hamilton. Within the first six months, he received several awards for his technical abilities and was promoted due to the quality of his work. While consulting for the Office of Immigration Statistics, Kasey created the capability to track apprehended persons through their time in the US using 11 data sources. This project was so successful that it was presented to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

Kasey’s desire to become a great analyst does not stop when school or work ends. Last fall, he started to develop several models in R to predict daily fantasy points for NBA players. After testing the accuracy of models of famous players, such as MaxDulary, Kasey realized that his models could compete with even the best daily fantasy sports players in the world. Currently, he is working with a classmate to build an algorithm that matches resumes to job postings. This algorithm is being developed in R and will be available to other students through an R-Shiny application. Whether he is reading FiveThirtyEight’s articles on politics or sports, or exploring the D3 JavaScript library for ideas, Kasey is always searching for new ways to analyze and display data.

On a personal note, Kasey enjoys traveling the world with his wife, playing the piano, and watching the Green Bay Packers dominate on a yearly basis. He traveled to Lambeau field for the first time last October.
The thought of planning a conference for over 600 attendees from across the southeastern United States would be daunting for most professionals and, even more so, for an undergraduate student. However, when there wasn’t a host for the annual SAACURH student leadership conference, David didn’t cower at the challenge; instead, he ran straight towards it. He carefully assembled a team of student leaders and developed an active, data-driven management style for delegating tasks and overseeing a $250,000 budget. Through his thoughtful leadership, the conference was five percent under budget and a success for its attendees.

Overseeing the logistics of conference planning helped David see firsthand the need for data-driven decision making. Soon after, he discovered a newly offered degree in marketing analytics and changed his major. Going into it, he did not have a passion for math or even a basic understanding of statistics, but this challenge further developed his joy in quantifying the world around him. This experience led David to take a job in operations with Grubb Properties, a leading real estate developer and operator in the southeast. Within a few weeks, he was conducting independent research into new markets and interacting directly with external investors. His thorough research and analytical approach helped key stakeholders in their evaluations of the business environment.

Outside of work and study, David enjoys hiking and taking in the natural beauty of North Carolina’s waterfalls. When not outdoors he can often be found pairing a good book with an even better cup of coffee — exploring the world one cup and one page at a time.
Jaewon Jung

Hometown: Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.S., Mathematical Decision Sciences with minor in Mathematics, 2016
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016

Everyone knows that one plus one always equals two. To Jaewon, this simple concept of clear right and wrong answers is what sparked her interest in mathematics at a young age. Thus, when she got to UNC she was in search of a field that applied as much mathematics as possible including economics, business, computer science, and statistics. However, it wasn’t until her summer internship at SAS Korea that the true power of data lured her into the field of analytics. Intrigued by how numbers were used to understand people instead of just stating facts, Jaewon was immediately attracted to the unbounded capabilities of data.

While at UNC, Jaewon was a member of the oldest female a cappella group, which was rated by College Magazine as one of the top-10 female collegiate a cappella groups in the US in 2016. Being part of an organization with high expectations, she learned the importance of communication and organization within the group to meet these standards. By understanding her clients and adjusting to different audiences, she was well prepared for any gig, whether it be singing to patients at the local hospital or opening for denim-lover Jay Leno at DPAC.

Jaewon enjoys snowboarding, playing competitive indoor volleyball, and watching her favorite survival show. She also hopes to own a husky and train it to howl, “I love you.”
As an exchange student at UNC manipulating scientific data sets, Florian quickly realized that, despite his business background, this was the field he wanted to explore. He took his curiosity one step further by interning at both the Boston Consulting Group and Celonis. Being part of a highly data-driven consulting project in the med-tech sector, Florian was able to experience a steep learning curve, while taking full responsibility of the data-gathering module. At Celonis, Florian was able to develop process models using SQL and Celonis' self-developed software stack while working with several clients in the manufacturing sector.

Following his passion for entrepreneurship and consulting, Florian has been involved in different organizations ranging from icons, Austria’s largest student run consultancy, to Leonhard, a prisoner entrepreneurship program supporting the rehabilitation of prisoners. As icon’s head of finance he was in charge of all financial endeavors with a yearly revenue of 100k and led project teams with up to five people. Moreover, Florian took Leonhard’s approach to educating prisoners even further and was able to win a hackathon with his idea "Second Chance" — providing offline access to educational online content.

When Florian can’t be found on a court running after a soccer ball or handball, one may be able to spy him 6000 feet above in his paraglider. Floating with the birds, enjoying the pure silence, and exploring the nature of the Alps gives Florian time to recharge his batteries for whatever new challenge may come.
Growing up in a small farm town, Matt’s eyes were set on experiencing as much as possible. Since high school, he has traveled throughout 39 states and nine countries trying diverse foods, attending sporting events, and exploring national parks. Highlights of his world travels include surfing with his twin brother in Costa Rica, attending college football games, snowboarding all over Mt. Hood in Oregon, and cheering on Atlético Madrid during the Champions League while visiting Spain.

Matt’s interest in analytics began while completing his B.S. in Mathematics. The field of data science did not present itself until he took a job in marketing operations at Red Bull North America, Inc. There, he used business insights generated by analytics and saw the benefits on marketing strategies. Ultimately, this led him to transition to an analytics-based career and back into using mathematics every day as a Credit Risk Analyst at the former First Niagara Bank in Buffalo, New York. There, he played a role in various portfolio analytics and modeling to estimate losses while quickly learning programming languages, such as SAS and SQL. These experiences cemented his passion for analytics and he hasn’t looked back since.

When taking a break from the daily grind, some of Matt’s hobbies include watching Buffalo Bills games, hiking in the mountains, playing soccer, trying new restaurants and breweries, taking weekend road trips, and sometimes relaxing with a Netflix marathon.
Katey Kilmer

Hometown: Rochester, New York
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
  B.S., magna cum laude, Statistics with minor in Mathematics, 2016
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

From a young age, Katey showed a strong ability to analyze patterns and solve problems systematically. Her mother often retells the story of her hopping into the car after a day of high school and exclaiming, "I wish I could just take math classes all day." After enjoying the real-life applications that her high school statistics class had to offer, Katey chose to study statistics with a minor in mathematics at NC State University.

While pursuing her undergraduate degree, Katey worked on multiple research projects including an environmental statistics practicum and a Bayesian analysis project. These projects introduced Katey to applied statistics and she developed a passion for big data. Working part time for the statistics department helped Katey form strong relationships with the professors, which led to two summer internships with STATMOS (Statistical Research Methods for Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences). Katey gathered information and produced both the 2015 and 2016 Annual STATMOS reports. While creating these reports, Katey discovered an excitement for statistical writing. Combining this interest of communicating statistical concepts with an infatuation with big data, she chose to pursue a masters in analytics.

Katey’s other passions consist of all things fitness including running and lifting. In her free time, she can often be found walking her dog, Sandy Waffles, or throwing around the lacrosse ball with her sister. Starting her fifth year at NC State, Katey is a diehard Wolfpack fan and loves to attend sporting events to cheer for her team.
Stephen Kimel

Hometown: Boone, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- M.B.A., Appalachian State University, 2010
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro
  B.Mus., *summa cum laude*, Jazz Studies with minor in German, 2008
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Stephen has a passion for analysis, creative thinking, and teaching. Since childhood, Stephen has enjoyed playing Euro games and dissecting them to determine best strategies. At age 17, as a shift supervisor at Starbucks, he volunteered to order all of the inventory for the store. This position enabled him to exercise his talents for problem solving and providing excellent customer service. While he was in charge of the orders, his store never ran out of any items.

Stephen is creative. While studying music in college, he wrote and performed a number of jazz songs. He brought this creativity to his work at Appalachian State. There, he enjoyed solving previously unsolved problems with data and programming. He wrote macros to make tasks more efficient, shortening the run time for one task from several weeks to only minutes. This efficiency allowed the university to supply frequently requested information that was previously unavailable.

Breaking down complex ideas and helping others understand them is one of Stephen’s strengths. He loves to teach people new strategy games in a way that is quick and easy to learn. While volunteering at an after school program, he tutored middle school students. He taught private guitar lessons and built up his business, retaining more than 80% of his students.

Outside of school and work, Stephen loves learning about other cultures and has traveled to 19 countries on five continents, often staying with locals. He’s also studied German and music in Austria for one semester.
As a creative thinker and recognized leader, Shelby thrives when she is solving complex problems and executing strategic solutions in a collaborative environment. Over the past four years, she has been working in software and business operations with information technology consulting. Through this experience she developed a strong understanding of diverse business processes and the technical infrastructure required to support them. Most recently, she worked on a multi-phase ERP implementation. Her leadership ability and results focus allowed her to quickly move into a team lead role, responsible for training development and delivery. Shelby thrives in team settings because she develops strong relationships and fosters effective and efficient team dynamics. In addition to project management skills and both technical and functional knowledge, her industry experience has equipped her with a strong work ethic and business acumen.

With an undergraduate degree in statistics, Shelby has always had an interest in creatively analyzing data to solve complex problems. Recognizing the importance of mathematical skills, she spent a summer teaching algebra and statistics in Malawi. Focusing on tangible applications of data analysis has been the primary focus in the pursuit of her analytics education and career. She combines critical thinking to analyze data with the ability to effectively communicate results and drive productive decisions.

Shelby keeps a healthy balance in her life with Pilates, yoga, barre, and cycling. She finds nothing more fulfilling than enjoying breakfast at a local café or playing soccer on a Saturday afternoon. Shelby relishes any opportunity to experience new cultures and cuisines; however, she is most alive when she is able to share those experiences with the ones she loves.
Sneha Komma

Hometown: Hyderabad, India
Citizenship: India

EDUCATION

- Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University
  B.Tech., First Class, Mechanical Engineering, 2009
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Sneha discovered a strong passion for data analysis when she started working as a technical lead at Google Maps in India. She was fascinated by how large amounts of geographic data were magically transformed into beautiful maps that are used today to navigate around cities. At Google, she was awarded a certificate for her contribution in leading her team through product launches at their annual Geo Awards ceremony.

After an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering and with the experience gained at Google, she went on to complete an executive business analytics program at the Indian School of Business (ISB). Later, she joined a startup called Gramener, specializing in data visualization and analytics. As a data consultant for Gramener, she had an opportunity to work closely on analytics projects with clients in the banking, finance, healthcare, and pharmaceutical industries. Sneha’s ability to collaborate with a cross-functional team of engineers, designers, and product managers proved to be a tremendous asset in the delivery of high-quality data analysis in a consulting environment.

She co-founded a startup in India that conducted various technical workshops and cultural events for high school students. In her free time, Sneha enjoys competitive chess or getting creative on a canvas or fabric painting. Sneha is currently exploring her inner chef—one recipe at a time.
Rachel believes there is no better satisfaction than figuring out how to solve a problem. This passion for puzzles has been prevalent throughout her life. Her interest ranges from physical puzzles, such as logic puzzles, to the more abstract ones, such as determining which machine learning technique to use to identify a copyrighted video. Regardless of the nature of the puzzle, she has approached every one set before her with the same determination and excitement.

It was while pursuing a graduate degree in electrical engineering that Rachel was introduced to data analytics. During a project where she was required to classify sounds into different types such as “animal” and then into finer types such as “bird” or “dog,” she began to realize that she was more interested in analyzing and building models on the data than the signal processing steps required to collect the data.

As an engineer at Vadum, a government research firm, Rachel learned the importance of adjusting presentations by tailoring content and speech to fit the audience. From presenting to her coworkers to presenting to a colonel, she was able to hone her communication skills of explaining technical information fluidly while also maintaining a good rapport with the audience.

When she is not studying, Rachel can often be found at the rock climbing wall attempting to figure out the correct moves to reach the top of the boulder. She is proud of the collection of stamps in her passport, of which six of the ten stamps were collected when she backpacked through Europe after her undergraduate degree.
Drew Lanning

Hometown: Thomasville, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Drew’s obsession with numbers has defined him for as long as he can remember. At the age of eight, he often begged his parents to take him to the local bookstore where he browsed the collection of math puzzle books in search of new and exciting challenges. Drew solidified his love for mathematics in his college studies where he eagerly pursued courses in linear algebra, differential equations, and real analysis. He worked diligently throughout his undergraduate career and graduated valedictorian in three years.

Drew is passionate about sharing the power of mathematics by making complex topics easy to understand. During the two years he spent as lead instructor at Mathnasium of Lake Boone, he refined his communication skills by teaching and inspiring second through twelfth grade students to tackle interesting math problems. Drew’s desire to master and evangelize the mathematics in data-driven insights led him to pursue analytics and he looks forward to a stimulating career in the constantly evolving discipline.

In the spring of 2016, Drew married his high school sweetheart, Sarah. Together, they love to hike in the North Carolina mountains, explore local parks for hidden swimming holes, and soak up the rays on Bald Head Island. Drew is always in search of a new adventure and he’s anxious to see what the future has in store.
As early as elementary school, Xiehong always impressed her classmates and teachers with her passion and talent in math and data. In middle school and high school, she dedicated herself to the Math Olympiad and often won first place in her city — an achievement that played a critical role in her admission to one of the most prestigious colleges in China. In college, she worked as a part-time high school math tutor for four years. Because of her in-depth knowledge about math and her lively tutoring style, even the students who struggled the most were able to gain confidence and significantly improve their quantitative abilities.

Xiehong is a self-motivated learner who thrives on challenges. While in college, simply excelling at solving theoretical problems no longer satisfied her; therefore, she constantly applied her math and statistics knowledge to practical situations. As a class leader, she initiated a project where her team developed a questionnaire and surveyed hundreds of college students on their choices of minor. She then performed extensive analysis that revealed the patterns between the students’ background and their minor subjects, which in turn served as useful guidance for future students. Her diligence and enthusiasm in applied statistics set the foundation for her to choose analytics as her ultimate career.

In her spare time, Xiehong actively serves in her church by organizing fellowship meetings, hosting new students from China, as well as helping in the nursery. She loves cooking traditional Chinese dishes, especially the Xiang Cuisine which is well known for its fresh aroma and spicy flavor.
Edward Lim

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Johns Hopkins University
  M.S.E., Applied Mathematics and Statistics, 2015
  B.S., Applied Mathematics and Statistics, 2015
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Edward became interested in analytics when his mother recovered from rheumatoid arthritis with data-driven personalized healthcare. He was fascinated by the use of data to regulate the dose of steroid in her injections to achieve a delicate balance between treatment and toxicity. Thus, he became passionate about machine learning research to provide large scale, inexpensive, and accurate diagnosis of complicated diseases.

At the Human Language Technology Center of Excellence, Edward collaborated with researchers from different disciplines to gather and analyze 32 million Tweets to detect language patterns of bipolar disorder, depression, and PTSD subjects. Despite being the only undergraduate student, he was involved in all aspects of the project, from cleaning the data and storing it in the database to building models and classifiers. Edward loved the interdisciplinary nature of the project — how linguists identified subtle nuances in language and statisticians quantified the signals.

Edward also had the privilege to apply his mathematical expertise in the military. As a sergeant of the Korean artillery, Edward was entrusted to lead a missile ballistics team that calculated the trajectory of a 40-kilometer artillery fire to land within a 10-meter radius. He handled the pressure of hazardous consequences and led his team to two national awards. In addition, he received an award for designing a ballistics program that was later implemented by the military.

Edward loves to invite people to his house and prepare Korean food for them. He enjoys experimenting with different spices and recipes, while entertaining friends.
A strong curiosity and interest in the world around him led Joe to study abroad in the UK for two years during high school. The experience of living with people from all over the world helped Joe understand the importance of developing a global perspective and effectively interacting with individuals from many different countries and cultures. In his future career Joe hopes to continue developing this perspective by taking advantage of international opportunities.

Joe excelled in his college coursework and developed a strong focus in actuarial science. However, after passing two actuarial exams and gaining experience in the insurance industry through a summer internship at Willis Towers Watson and an actuarial internship at Cigna, he began to recognize the power and importance of advanced analytics in the business world. After taking an elective in data mining his junior year, Joe decided the field of analytics was his best fit and where he could make the biggest impact for a business. Continuing to build upon this newly discovered interest, Joe performed an independent study into several marketing analytics techniques as part of his senior project — it was awarded first place in the Mathematics-Statistics category at his university's undergraduate research conference.

Along with a passion for mathematics and analytics, throughout his life Joe has developed a deep respect and appreciation for the natural world. In his spare time, Joe can be found surfing along the New Hampshire seacoast or in the White Mountains striving to summit all of the 4000-foot peaks.
Born and raised in Greece, Ioannis was torn between an undergraduate degree in music and culinary school. While music won him over, cooking on various occasions remains an integral part of his personality — he cooks meals for his roommates, and when in Greece, for his entire family.

After graduation, Ioannis undertook a managerial role at a music magazine in Greece during a really turbulent period for the country (2008-2011). Despite his company's contraction of 94% during that period, he was retained multiple times and promoted to HR Director before he left the country to get an MBA.

The MBA was part of his plan to couple his music degree with business and pursue a career in the music industry, but data science got in the way. During his MBA internship, he learned SAS in order to build a discrimination model and was blown away by the applications of statistics in business. Despite his long-lasting passion for both music and the culinary arts, neither ever made him lose track of time the way programming in SAS did. At that time, Ioannis reevaluated his life goals and focused on NC State University’s MSA program. The position he looked for after business school, the projects that he undertook at that position, and the training he sought were selected with his one goal in mind—admittance to the program.

Ioannis still plays music, he still cooks for all of his roommates and family, and he sails the Greek islands. In his free time, he loves getting involved with his family’s wine and olive oil production unit in the island of Crete.
Amir Lyall

Hometown: Coral Springs, Florida
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
  B.S., magna cum laude, Chemical Engineering, 2012
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Amir went from spinning tires to making tires when he began his career at the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Exposed to Six Sigma principles through process capability analyses on components used in the manufacturing of passenger tires, he ended his co-op with an experimental synthetic rubber named after him. Following Goodyear, he took part in experimental design at LORD Corp., studying interactions between chemicals used in rubber-metal adhesives found in military helicopters. After graduation, Amir helped Merck license and manufacture vaccines for children and the elderly. He was drawn to analytics when working on large projects where the power of data mining was used to communicate key strategic decisions.

Growing up, Amir enjoyed exploring his interests. His parents taught him to play chess while his siblings got him interested in video games like Zelda and Mortal Kombat. Sports turned out to be his main interest. Tennis was his preferred sport in high school, where he could analyze and strategize on how to beat his opponent; however, his favorite sport continues to be basketball. He is an avid Miami Heat fan (pre- and post-LeBron).

Amir is the youngest of four “Paki-tinians” – his father is from Pakistan and his mother is from Argentina. He is keen on exploring the food of the two cultures, especially spicy chicken curry and asado (barbecue). He has been married for two years and loves traveling with his wife, Elizabeth. They typically take road trips but have also visited Mexico and Argentina. He enjoys playing fetch with his 75-pound black lab/boxer mix, Weezy.
Diego's experiences with Alvaro, his little brother who has autism and Waardenburg syndrome, sparked his curiosity for exceptional individuals. Driven by this, he grappled with genetics at UNC's dynamic laboratories and joined the Autism Society to assess the progress of children with autism. Through his academic and professional experiences, Diego has always aimed to interpret and communicate findings in ways that change minds and impact behaviors.

In addition to cultivating his skills as a scientist, Diego earned an economics degree where he grasped the importance of data analysis. Implementing concepts of econometrics inspired him to independently research the NBA and build models that optimized offensive schemes throughout various eras of the sport. Diego’s unique analytical perspective, along with his creativity and diligence, led him to host his own sports and culture radio show. On air, he is known for his ability to convey complex statistics in a clear, concise, and convincing manner.

Alvaro’s condition prompted Diego’s early maturation, which redefined his role in his family and endowed him with the responsibilities of a leader. He is at his best in a team setting where his moxie drives him to consciously encourage full participation of all members. In his free time, he enjoys learning about compelling topics through the Internet and film. He also loves to visit the mountains and looks forward to taking grand hikes with his puppy, Oliver. Finding time for these exploratory “deep dives” on the Internet and fulfilling his love of travel is sometimes challenging but always worthwhile.
Patricia has always liked all kinds of mathematical and logic-related problems. At school, she participated with some classmates in national and international Mathematical and Linguistics Olympiads. These experiences offered her the opportunity to have a good time, learn how to play with numbers, explore new cities, and meet people from many different countries and cultures.

Always open to challenges, as an undergraduate she completed two degree programs (Business Administration and Law) in six years, which normally takes eight or nine years. During the double degree, she was selected from among several economics and business administration students at the University of Navarra to spend a semester at the IESE Business School. This was a great opportunity for her since the program follows the case method approach that promotes the development of professional skills such as time management, communication, teamwork, and adaptability.

Traveling is something that Patricia really likes and she tries to do it every time she has the chance. It doesn’t matter if she travels with her family, goes backpacking with some friends, discovers big well-known cities or small hidden amazing places — each trip offers her the chance to get to know new people and a new culture, to have fun with the people that are important to her, or to get to know herself better. Besides traveling, she enjoys soccer. She doesn’t miss the chance to watch a soccer match, especially if Real Madrid plays.
Annabel has loved puzzles her whole life. Whether it was Sudoku, cross-words, or a 1,000-piece jigsaw, she found nothing more intriguing. During her first algebra class in high school, she realized math was just one big puzzle waiting for her to solve.

Years later, she took on an internship with PharPoint Research compiling pharmaceutical research using SAS. She created listings and tables for clients to interpret and she discovered another puzzle — computer programming. The hours of coding to get the final product were as fulfilling and wonderful to Annabel as putting in the last piece in a jigsaw.

A few months later, she accepted an internship with Live Oak Bank to embrace a new challenge — computer programming using R. She worked with an incredible team to build a model to optimize flight costs. Brainstorming, researching, data cleaning, and data exploration showed Annabel more pieces to the model-building mystery. Because of how interested Annabel was in the work, there was never a day in the office that didn’t fly by. Her colleagues admired her energized work ethic and devotion to the project. Throughout the internship, Annabel realized that analytics was the greatest puzzle she had ever encountered and she was thrilled to take on its challenge.

Annabel enjoys meeting new people and working in teams because of her love for traveling and experiencing the world firsthand. As evidenced by studying abroad in both Australia and Spain, she seizes any opportunity to meet new people and embrace new cultures. Her love for sailing, tennis, skiing, and traveling gives her an education through real-life experiences she incorporates in her professional life.
Growing up in a large family and with an identical twin brother, Eric was a born competitor. His passion for competition drove his interest in basketball, baseball, and golf where Eric not only learned to be a leader, but also a team player. As Eric's knowledge of sports matured, his intrigue for statistics grew exponentially. Eric imagined the vast opportunities that statistics could offer him so he enrolled as a statistics major at NC State University.

As an undergraduate he conducted research alongside Dr. Renee Moore, who introduced him to biostatistics and big data. Prior to his research assistantship, Eric had no experience with the SAS programming language. Yet, he managed to teach himself SAS in just a summer working with Dr. Moore, which solidified his ability to learn new languages in a short period of time. At The Summer Institute Training for Students in Biostatistics, Eric gained hands-on experience working with actual data collected in internationally recognized studies that have been conducted at the Duke Clinical Research Institute.

During his undergraduate career, Eric and his sister, Paige, started Wolfpack Pickup — a student service that helps transport students with a temporary or permanent mobility disability around campus. He spent three years as the lead and senior driver helping the program win multiple awards including the Outstanding Service Program L.E.A.D. Award for the 2015-16 academic year. In his spare time, Eric likes to compete in a wide variety of sports from disc golf to basketball to kayaking. His future ambitions include spreading the Wolfpack Pickup program to other institutions, visiting every national park in the U.S., and traveling to Europe.
Phil uncovered his passion for statistics almost by accident. While studying mathematics as an undergrad, Phil took his first statistics course and had an “ah-ha!” moment. He realized this is what he expected mathematics to be. After confirming his love for the field when reading *Moneyball* by Michael Lewis, Phil realized he wanted to take that same approach to better the world.

Before finding his love of statistics, Phil knew the definition of hard work through facing adversity as an undergrad student. While taking on a full course load, he was working part-time as a student maintenance worker for on-campus apartments while still finding the time to make it home on the weekends to help his family during difficult times. Through this he discovered a desire and joy in not only helping but also in seeing others overcome challenges. These desires show true as Phil volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and is part of a mentoring group and kid’s ministry through his church.

Phil embraces challenges and lifting up those around him. Phil is a great asset to have on a team because not only does he complete the work assigned to him, but he also understands that the success of the team is dependent on everybody completing their tasks. He will do what is necessary to ensure the team is successful, whether that means extra hours, sharing knowledge, or stepping into difficult tasks with tight deadlines. When the opportunity presents itself, Phil can be found outdoors enjoying golfing, fishing, or pushing himself for his next marathon.
During his 2015-2016 Fulbright Scholarship in India, Brandon realized that his greatest strengths are his natural curiosity, his open-mindedness about the world’s cultures, and his ability to gain valuable insights with his analytical skills in unfamiliar situations. These strengths were by then professionally well-developed, but had been part of Brandon’s nature from early on in his professional life.

Brandon’s innate interest in other cultures and his strong sense of service led him to become a language analyst in the United States Army. He was trained at what has been commonly cited as the most prestigious language school in the world — the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. There he became fluent in the Pashto language, one of the two primary languages spoken in Afghanistan. Through his continued training and his experience gained from supporting NATO operations in Afghanistan for nearly six years, Brandon learned to discover actionable insights in dynamic situations. These experiences developed Brandon’s adeptness at qualitative analysis to a significant degree, but he knew that upon his return to the civilian world a strong command of quantitative techniques would complement the skills he had gained in the military.

While pursuing a degree at Roanoke College, after completing his term of service in the Army, Brandon took a course on business analytics that resonated with his past analytical experience and further fueled his interest in improving his quantitative skills. The melding of these two skillsets culminated in Brandon’s application for and award of the Fulbright Scholarship to India. There he conducted analysis on the flow of private foreign investment into startups and made use of his sharpened qualitative skills and improving quantitative skills.
Taylor Mikkola

Hometown: Winston Salem, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.S., with Distinction, Mathematical Decision Sciences with minors in Cognitive Science and Spanish, 2016
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

On childhood family road trips to upper Michigan, puzzle books and sketchpads always competed for space among Taylor's things. In high school, her backpack was full of math textbooks while she also toted around her portfolio for current art projects. Her passions for both numbers and art drove Taylor in her pursuits growing up and, later, as she moved into undergraduate study. It was in a business modeling course that she discovered data analytics as the perfect way to engage her fervor for mathematics and problem solving, as well as employ her creative, unique perspective for solutions and visualizations.

The summer before her senior year of college, Taylor earned the opportunity to explore these interests as a financial planning and analysis intern for TE Connectivity, a $12 billion global technology company. She utilized SAP and Excel on a daily basis to report on large sets of data relating to company inventory, while interacting with employees in multiple offices in both the United States and Mexico. At the end of the summer, she was offered a position to continue working remotely throughout her senior year, further expanding her experience and solidifying her intention to pursue a future in analytics.

Taylor continues to view art as a creative outlet, especially enjoying painting in her free time. Having been a member of soccer, volleyball, and cross country teams throughout her years in school, she still loves to join in on pickup games with her friends and go on evening runs with local running clubs.
David’s passion for analytics is fueled by his constant pursuit for creative outlets. J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* introduced him to the world of reading, but it was Herman Hesse who imparted the importance of art and literature on him. Works such as *Siddhartha* and *Demian* inspired him to start writing his own stories and to explore similar authors like Marcel Proust and Leo Tolstoy. A whole new world of introspection and learning opened, and David found himself relentlessly seeking creative outlets. He learned to draw landscapes in pastel, sang in his school’s honors chorus, and studied jazz guitar. However, it was an elective biology class at a community college that led him to analytics.

David found himself enamored with biology, and it was because of this affinity that he chose to study data science at the College of Charleston. He joined a genomics data science research group at the College, where his creativity and love for learning made him stand out as a problem-solver. He loved the versatile applicability of data science to biological problems which he used to analyze marine animal genomes. His exposure to complex genetic data inspired him to develop an algorithm to account for confounding factors in data sets, which was recently published in IEEE Xplore.

Aside from analytics, David has the ambitious goal of visiting every continent by his 30th birthday. He recently spent seven weeks backpacking through eight European countries, the highlight of which was climbing Germany’s tallest mountain, Zugspitze.
Sarah’s passion for visually representing information is what originally led her to analytics. First, her love of diagrams, charts, and maps steered her toward a major in architecture, where she gained 3-D modeling, hand-drawing, and graphics programming skills. Training in art and design gave her the ability to create visuals that make complex information understandable and graphically appealing. Then, an introductory economics course changed the direction of her path. She became an economics major and, when she learned more about business, statistics, and information technology, Sarah found that she could apply her aptitude for visual representation in ways that would have real-world impacts. Having discovered the practical value that her background in design could lend to data-driven business decisions, she worked with a renewed sense of purpose to graduate as Valedictorian and was motivated to continue developing her analytics skills in graduate school.

Sarah also used her time in college to work on addressing issues about which she is passionately concerned. As the College of Design’s Shack-a-thon project lead, Sarah recruited and managed approximately 100 volunteers who constructed and occupied a shack for a week to raise almost $1,000 to benefit Habitat for Humanity. This, as well as her experiences serving on the executive boards of other student organizations, taught her about the importance of collaboration and leadership.

Whether motorcycling around the islands of Greece or sailing on Jordan Lake, Sarah is passionate about exploring, and her love of traveling was only increased by studying abroad at Copenhagen Business School. When she’s not coding, Sarah enjoys exploring the outdoors with her dog, Dash, and drawing the places where she ends up on her adventures.
Beth first knew she had an interest in statistics by the excitement she felt playing Yahtzee as a child, calculating probabilities of what each player could roll. Ever since, she has had a passion for finding patterns and strategies in all aspects of life. She put her passion to use in her studies by examining trends and generating prediction models in subjects ranging from the housing crisis of 2008 to basketball statistics.

During her time at UNC, Beth gained strong leadership skills with her sorority, Pi Beta Phi, as Vice President of Administration and served as marketing chair for the sorority’s annual Eve Carson Memorial 5K, the largest 5K in Chapel Hill history. The 5K raises money for the Eve Carson Scholarship to promote literacy and education, both strong values for Beth. The summer before her senior year, Beth worked as a business analyst at Cisco and assisted in the development of balanced scorecard dashboards used by top executives in Cisco’s Global Business Services. While at Cisco, she also joined the company’s Connected Women organization and co-founded the group’s first intern-focused sessions, which generated unique mentor opportunities for more than 40 interns.

Beth loves international travel, her favorite countries to date being Italy and South Africa. It’s her dream to travel to all seven continents in her lifetime and Asia is next on her list. She spends her free time searching for the latest information on Tar Heel basketball, but is slowly learning to be a Wolfpack fan as well.
Shannon Muldoon

Hometown: Syracuse, New York
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of Vermont
  B.S.B.A., Business Administration with minor in Statistics, 2014
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Growing up, Shannon loved and appreciated the creativity, self-discipline, and attention to detail that classical ballet training required. By 14, she had performed in her first professional ballet production of Swan Lake. Her passion for creativity, however, was in constant competition with her propensity to solve challenging problems. It wasn’t until an introductory statistics class in college that she realized she could mix her inclination for innovation with her business mindset. Analytics satisfied her desire to use creative techniques to design data-driven business solutions.

After graduation she worked in the health care field as a business development specialist, where she assisted in finding the best insurance solutions for current and potential clients. Given the rising number of formal requests for proposals (RFPs) coming in, it was clear that there was a need for a more efficient way to respond to the bids. Shannon was given the opportunity to take the lead in building a new platform to house a streamlined proposal template for the Business Development Team. After she designed the infrastructure, implemented the new process, and trained the team, significant decreases in the time required to compose an RFP were reported. This process improvement allowed her company to reply to more bids, without compromising quality or consistency.

Even though Shannon likes working in a fast-paced environment, she still enjoys relaxing with her rescue dog on the beach, taking yoga classes, and painting photorealism portraits in her downtime.
Nils didn't always strive for excellence – but that changed in the ninth grade. Although he had an ultimate goal of playing varsity basketball, his training efforts didn't match his ambition and he was cut from the freshman team. Deeply humbled, but undeterred, Nils learned that in order to achieve his goals, consistent training and practice were required. He intensified his work habits and, in his senior year, was voted as co-captain of the state championship contending varsity basketball team.

This newfound drive for excellence motivated Nils in more areas than basketball. After his first year in college, Nils moved to Brazil for a proselytizing and language immersion program and was met with bewildering culture shock and extreme language barriers. However, in less than six months, he was fluent in Portuguese and embraced the rich Brazilian culture. Two years later, Nils returned to the US to finish his undergraduate career and achieved marked collegiate success. He received a 4-year full-tuition leadership scholarship, co-authored an academic paper using Hidden Markov models, and passed the Advanced Calculus Master’s qualifying examination.

This blend of ambition, international experience, and analytical talent combined to set Nils apart at his first job in EY’s Quantitative Economics and Statistics department. He adeptly navigated the corporate culture and contributed to projects involving: statistical sampling, business analytics, model validation, and large-scale surveys. For example, as the only Portuguese speaker, he was selected to code and distribute a large-scale survey in Portuguese to over 100,000 medical professionals intended to inform Brazilian lawmakers of the medical landscape in Brazil.
Doug Nicholson

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- College of William and Mary
  B.A., Economics; Neuroscience, 2012
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

From childhood afternoons spent ranking Hot Wheels according to likelihood of completing double loops to a job uncovering the most efficient places to focus foreign aid funding, Doug’s passion for finding and sharing patterns is inexhaustible. He embraces not only the discovery of patterns, but also communicating them as solutions in collaborative settings.

Doug learned very quickly how powerful interdisciplinary problem-solving can be at AidData, an innovation and research lab focused on international development. As a data analyst and program manager, he championed the idea that purposeful data collection and statistical impact evaluation are crucial for improving the effectiveness of foreign aid interventions. On a US Department of Defense grant, Doug led the efforts to collect, integrate, and georeference aid project data so that aid-conflict dynamics could be further probed with simulations and computational models in 30 African countries.

Doug has taught hundreds of research assistants, visiting fellows, and colleagues the ins and outs of data wrangling, geospatial analysis, continuously integrated data workflows, and the importance of open data as a community resource. As a member of AidData’s geospatial data team, he has provided vitally important data management expertise to clients such as USAID and The World Bank.

When he’s not browsing open data portals or catching up on the latest sports analytics insights from FiveThirtyEight, Doug enjoys hiking with his friends in the Shenandoah Valley, where he always packs a candy bar for the summit. His pipe dreams involve starting a brewery with his brother, building his own shed, and coaching soccer in the youth Olympic Development Program.
An obsession with LEGO in his childhood ignited Pranav’s passion for building. Recently, he has built custom PCs and 3D printed objects ranging from fun gadgets to practical day-to-day items. His need to create, coupled with his love of technology and helping others, propelled him to study biomedical engineering. In his undergraduate research, Pranav was introduced to the world of data mining and machine learning. Fueled by his curiosity and desire to learn, Pranav immersed himself into this new realm, earning him the recognition of Abrams Scholar for constructing algorithms to assess tumor heterogeneity using medical image data.

It wasn’t until Pranav’s R&D internship at Advanced Animal Diagnostics that he discovered the true power of analytics. Tasked to develop a classification algorithm for bovine leukocytes, Pranav recognized the larger implications of the analysis. The project aimed to reduce antibiotic use in bovines to combat bacterial resistance, a difficult and uncharted venture. Pranav realized that insights derived from analytics can help companies address seemingly impossible issues and give them a competitive edge. Pranav strives to study and apply the breadth of analytics to drive business decisions.

In his free time, Pranav enjoys his newfound interest in airbrushing model kits, cheering on the Carolina Panthers, and fixating over supercars — eagerly awaiting the day he can own one. Pranav also enjoys traveling. His favorite experiences were snowtubing on Mount Titlis in Switzerland and swimming under the Avocat waterfall in Trinidad. He looks forward to exploring Japan and New Zealand in the near future.
Mike Northeim

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
  B.S., magna cum laude, Business Administration, 2013
  B.S., magna cum laude, Economics, 2013
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

As a highly energetic professional with more than three years of corporate experience, Mike's curiosity and desire for lifelong learning have enabled him to identify patterns and solve issues many do not yet know exist. In his career, Mike has had the opportunity to lead global teams, manage cross-functional projects, create analytical tools that have caught over $100 million in incorrect sales crediting, and manage budgets in excess of $200 million per year. While working on these initiatives, his passion for continuous learning has pushed Mike to teach himself a wide range of programming languages and analytical tools. Mike is adept at critical thinking, problem solving, and building meaningful relationships. This has led to a proven record of saving organizations substantial time and money.

Even at a young age, Mike had an interest in solving puzzles and finding patterns. In his teenage years, Mike taught himself how to solve both the 3x3 and 5x5 Rubix Cubes, using them to entertain children while working as an overnight camp counselor. Mike also collects coins as a hobby; having a specialized knowledge allows him to find value where others do not. His best find was a 1995 W American Eagle, which he purchased for $65 and sold for over $3000.

Mike has a very strong work ethic, and has had a job ever since he was 13. From being a soccer referee to leading an analytics team based in India, Mike has had many opportunities both to lead and work as part of a team. When not working, Mike enjoys hiking and backpacking all around the world. Having visited over 30 national parks, Mike hopes to visit them all.
A left-handed softball pitcher since the age of 11, Erica has always been a competitive person. No matter the task, there is something that drives her to be the best she can be. Erica had two goals: to wear the colors of red, white, and blue with USA across her chest and become a Division I All-American. She accomplished those goals in the 2013 Junior World Championships and after her stellar senior year at the University of South Florida. She knew attaining such goals would require sacrifice, dedication, and hard work. These same attributes continued throughout her career at USF by maintaining high-intensity practices and striving for academic excellence.

Her interest in math started in high school, when she took her first calculus course. Enrolling as a statistics major at USF, Erica fell in love with problem solving. A professor spoke in one of her classes about ticket analysis and this was the “aha” moment that drove her towards a study of analytics. Adding minors in business and entrepreneurship gave her a sense of potential real-world problems and ways to solve them by using a data-driven approach.

Four years of college, in the melting pot of Tampa, has turned Erica into a self-proclaimed “foodie.” Away from the classroom, she enjoys teaching and mentoring young girls about the game of softball. A history buff, she also enjoys traveling to historical cities to enjoy the culture, famous local restaurants, and monuments.

Erica Nunn
Hometown: Apex, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION
- University of South Florida
  B.A., magna cum laude, Statistics with minors in Business Administration and Entrepreneurship, 2016
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016
As a neurobiology student, Rose was fascinated by the underpinnings and predictability of human behavior. After working in marketing, she became interested in exploring the factors that influence behavior from an economic perspective. This interest led her to the discovery that combining her knowledge of neurobiology with the power of analytics allowed her to better predict the choices that people made, even when those choices were not rational.

Rose is an adaptable individual who has transitioned from being a pre-medical student to a marketing professional and then an IT professional. The variety of her experiences have equipped her with a diverse set of skills that allow her to foster collaboration across different functional teams and communicate easily with people with varying levels of technical expertise. Due to her self-motivation and dedication to producing high-quality work, within seven months of beginning her role as a user support specialist for Harvard University Information Technology, Rose was nominated for a Harvard Heroes award for going beyond her defined responsibilities and making exceptional contributions to her team.

Rose took her first international trip when she moved to the US for college, and has since traveled to fifteen other countries in order to explore unfamiliar places and experience new cultures. She is also an avid chef who likes to recreate Ghanaian dishes using Western cooking techniques, and it is her dream to receive formal training in these techniques one day. In her free time, she loves to dance, and participated in five hip-hop dance performances as an undergraduate.
Kelly has always been drawn to solving challenging puzzles including Sudoku, logic grid problems, and other mind games. This love of tackling difficult problems led her to study textile engineering, an undergraduate degree that taught the fundamentals of problem solving. While initially focused on developing new textile products for the military, a course on VBA programming led Kelly to discover her love for data analytics. To further understand how to extract knowledge from data, she added a minor in Industrial Engineering and took additional courses in statistics and database design.

During her undergraduate career, Kelly demonstrated her leadership and drive on campus and in industry. She was the president of the Textile Engineering Society and received the College of Textiles Award for Academics. To deepen her industry experience, Kelly applied data analytics skills during two internships. Her first internship was at Victoria's Secret where she utilized her VBA skills to help develop a lab request management system. While working for HanesBrands Inc., she utilized data to improve the company's cotton purchasing strategies. These two internships solidified her love of using data to tackle industry challenges and figuring out the puzzles hidden within data.

In her spare time, Kelly plays second base in a local intramural softball league and loves to watch superhero movies and romantic comedies. She enjoys baking allergy-friendly desserts and experimenting with new recipes in the kitchen. Kelly still ends every day by breaking online records for logic puzzles.
DT’s deep passion for assisting those in need drives him to create opportunities for others. He has heard students say they cannot attend college because of their socioeconomic background, witnessed the drastic income disparity in San Francisco, and listened to local families in urgent need of housing assistance. To complement his compassionate and empathetic nature, he has devoted his time to becoming a well-rounded professional who can analyze data, communicate to audiences of all sizes, and take on leadership and followership roles in teams. His primary goal is to be a catalyst of long-term change so all people have equal opportunities.

While pursuing a BS in statistics at NC State University, the Caldwell Fellows program challenged DT to mature his definition of servant-leadership. Leading two service-learning teams as a Caldwell Fellow, he prompted sophomores to evaluate how change could be made in their projects and worldview in order to more efficiently benefit the lives of others. He also served his peers by working on 20 teams to give presentations to audiences of up to 100 students as a Career Development Center Ambassador. In 2015, one of his team’s presentations was voted as the best presentation of the semester by the CDC leadership team.

A native of Meat Camp in the Blue Ridge Mountains, DT loves scaling amphibolite mountains with no trails, exploring new areas with no map, floating down the New River with his mom and sister, running with his Great Pyrenees, and jamming out to No Doubt albums.
Coming from an educational system that was heavily into mathematics and a culture that embraces philosophy and politics, Sofia (born and raised in Greece) could only find interest in the field that combines all three — economics. Not only did she register in all available courses in math and economics, but she graduated having a heavy load of 52 courses in pure math, statistics, and economics.

During her undergraduate studies, Sofia gained invaluable experience in the accounting, finance, and human resources areas by working effectively with a diverse population of individuals at the International Airport of Greece. From providing logistical support to managers to dealing with customer complaints, her determination and willingness to work hard and complete any task assigned enabled her to stand out as an exceptional employee and to achieve outstanding performance levels throughout her professional career.

Her educational advancement continued by graduating with honors with a Master’s in Business Administration. The knowledge was priceless especially in the area of improving her managerial and presentation skills, but what made a real impact on her professional life was when she learned her first programming language, SAS. From that point she knew that programming had to be a part of her everyday professional life.

Sofia enjoys competitive sports like archery — she is excellent using both recurve and compound bow — and she won first place in the class final competition at NC State University.
Shruti Patel

Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.S., with Distinction, Psychology; Sociology with minor in Public Policy, 2016 Honors Program
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Shruti is devoted to improving the social conditions of those around her. From her job as a security sergeant at Charlotte Motor Speedway to her work with mental health and interpersonal violence prevention reform, she has been committed to engendering a sense of safety and security. Given her social consciousness, unique perspective, and attention to detail, Shruti is skilled at developing innovative solutions for complex issues. As co-president of a student organization focused on mental health activism, she improved access to health care resources by partnering with Recovery International to provide free cognitive-based training, influencing health policy through a cross-campus campaign, and developing a buddy system.

Desiring to understand and help people, Shruti was drawn to psychology and sociology. However, she soon realized that her inclination towards the theoretical could provide a limited impact alone. For all of the arenas she found herself in, the question always became, “where are the numbers?” This shift in perspective allowed her to adapt into a data-driven, decision making mindset. Nevertheless, her background helps her maintain a balanced perspective when approaching analytical problems. Particularly, she finds that her class on test theory keeps her cognizant of what she is really investigating.

Alongside her passion for social reform and analytics, Shruti enjoys performing. From the age of seven, she has loved the classical Indian dance form Bharatanatyam, which culminated in her becoming co-captain of her university's dance team. Shruti also enjoys making art for her friends and family, discovering classic rock music, and completing logic puzzles.
One of John’s first experiences with the power of data occurred during his freshman psychology class. The professor, a world-renown expert on sleep, shared that total sleep is highly related to success in just about every field. Taking this research to heart, John decided to analyze his personal sleep habits using a Zeo Sleep Monitor. He expected to find that the earlier he went to sleep the more sleep he would get, but the data showed otherwise. In fact, there was a golden sleep zone, not too early nor too late, which led to maximum total sleep.

Since this time, John’s interest in analytics has continued to grow. In internships with both SAS and IBM, John was given responsibility for analyzing the data scientist role. Encouraged by what he found, John decided to launch the Cornell Data Science club to prepare members for careers in analytics, machine learning, and other data-focused fields. The club, which received $4k+ funding from Cornell and became established as an engineering project team, attracted over 50 regularly attending members who worked on a diverse array of challenging Data Science projects.

Most recently, John worked as a Data Scientist for IBM’s Market Insights organization. In this role, he combined competitive installation data with internal revenue data to identify which competitors posed the greatest threats to specific IBM accounts. Based on a strong reception for this work, John was made team lead for competitive intelligence analytics, eventually releasing a set of predictive analytic tools that garnered acclaim — due to their granularity and comprehensive inclusion of both traditional and emerging competitors.
Jordan searches for real adventure and original experiences. On a backpacking trip to Italy, Jordan once found himself camping on the peak of a mountain in the northern Italian Alps in the middle of a thunderstorm. While this experience was unnerving, the struggle and discomfort of the situation left a lasting impact on Jordan. Breathing in the crisp mountain air, overlooking a magnificent view of the Alps the next morning, helped Jordan realize that oftentimes, facing challenges is the most important thing one can do to grow. This outlook means that Jordan enjoys testing himself both physically and intellectually. Jordan regularly pushes his ability as a rock climber and as a cyclist, as he thrives on the combination of the mental aspect and physical demand of these sports.

During his undergraduate career, Jordan worked for the Arkansas Center for Research in Economics, where he produced two research papers. Jordan also produced a third research paper for his capstone thesis project, which has since been published in an economic journal. Jordan’s experience in economic research led him to realize his propensity for data analysis. While he enjoyed collecting data, Jordan became captivated by the conclusions he could draw from data rather than the process of simply gathering it. Jordan’s passion for learning and challenges has inspired him to pursue analytics more seriously.

In his free time, when Jordan is not climbing or cycling, he enjoys trying to cook new foods with his wife. While both he and his wife are adventurous with their food choices, their favorite cuisines to prepare are Vietnamese and Thai dishes because they love the slow burning spice of oriental fare.
While Edward was in graduate school, he discovered an opportunity to completely overhaul a labor-intensive process that students had been running without change for over 40 years. The outdated process involved manually transcribing thousands of data points from chart recorder paper. Knowing that there had to be a better way, Edward wrote code to automatically digitize the data. This reduced a semester’s worth of work down to two weeks, but even more importantly it made the data retrieval more accurate. Edward then turned that code into software called “Grab It!” and founded DataTrend Software in order to sell the program to thousands of customers around the world — including Fortune 500 companies, universities, and dozens of government agencies.

Edward’s ability to improve existing processes is a recurring theme in his career, so he is naturally drawn to analytics in order to discover innovative business solutions. While at HexaTech, he developed a regression model that uncovered the influence of a previously ignored process variable that was causing a major manufacturing defect. However, it wasn’t enough to just make the breakthrough, Edward also had to convince other team members to make significant changes to the current process. Based on Edward’s recommendations, the defect frequency was reduced by more than 90%, significantly improving the yield of the company’s most valuable product.

In Edward’s free time, he enjoys listening to NPR podcasts, reading science fiction or history from authors like John Scalzi and Ian Toll, and camping in the mountains. A favorite place is Crater Lake National Park because Edward likes the peace and relaxation of the great outdoors.
Andrew Procter

Hometown: Birmingham, Alabama
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Duke University
  Ph.D., Biology, 2012
- Emory University
  B.S., Biology, 2005
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Andrew is a science geek with an interest in business. He has pipetted DNA, designed experiments, and analyzed communities of soil microbes. Along the way he discovered a love for teaching and communicating science. This became an interest in analytics when he was bicycling in downtown Durham and noticed a man building a futuristic bicycle-car behind a storefront. The man, Rob Cotter, turned out to be the CEO of a startup company and Andrew wrote a white paper for the company, analyzing the potential CO₂ emissions reduction from their product. This experience introduced Andrew to the world of business—investors, supply chain, marketing—and made him realize that business has much the same spirit of experiment as science. He also realized that the statistical methods of biology apply to the jungle of consumers and companies.

A research experience at the US Environmental Protection Agency furthered Andrew's interest in data analytics, particularly within a team setting. He worked on team projects using system dynamics modeling to investigate how cities can improve their resource use efficiency. One project, now a published first-author journal article, investigated energy, water, and waste systems on a US Army base.

Outside of analytics, Andrew enjoys cooking, hiking, comedy, and science fiction. He has played soccer and ultimate Frisbee, and views sports and games as a good model for the business world. Andrew has a continuing interest in teaching and has taught biology to K-12, as well as undergraduate students.
Sneha Raghavan

Hometown: Singapore
Citizenship: Singapore, U.S. Permanent Resident

EDUCATION

- College of William and Mary
  B.A., *cum laude*, Departmental Honors in International Relations, 2012
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

A childhood spent traveling around Asia fueled Sneha’s interest in developing economies. While at William and Mary majoring in International Relations, she received an award to conduct a research project modeling countries’ strategic interests through their financial aid flows, sparking a passion for quantitative research.

After college, Sneha spent three years working at two prominent Washington, D.C. think tanks performing data-based research on international security and development. Her favorite research project involved the study of a new nationwide biometric database in India. Sneha was fascinated by how the collection of data can grant millions access to healthcare or financial services. This kindled Sneha’s interest in large-scale data projects: she was convinced that harnessing and analyzing customer data could create revolutionary change across the income spectrum. She wanted to be a part of this revolution by gaining exposure to analytics in the real world — the world beyond research. As a first step, she started working at a small digital marketing agency where she found the most satisfaction in showing her clients the value of their investment through marketing analytics. Within a year, she was promoted to digital data manager, focusing her efforts on projects with data challenges.

An avid reader since a young age, Sneha particularly enjoys dystopian literature and contemporary fiction by immigrant authors and poets. She is grateful to have a husband who shares her love of horror movies. They both love cooking and making cocktails (often inspired by their travels) with their family and friends.
Eric Reidelbach

Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of Mississippi
  M.B.A., 2014
- United States Naval Academy
  B.S., With Merit, Computer Science, 2005
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

To most people, the sky is the limit; but, for Eric, the sky is home. From graduating at the top of his class in flight school to being honored as the Naval Aviator of the year, he has always kept his aspirations and achievements as high as the altitudes at which he flew. Serving in demanding, pressure-filled operating environments around the world helped him develop and refine his superior levels of critical thinking, communication, and leadership. Whether it was hunting pirates off the coast of Somalia, tracking submarines in the South China Sea, or landing a disabled helicopter on the back of a rocking ship at night, Eric's experiences have filled him with the resolute belief that perceived limits can be surpassed through planning, hard work, and execution.

Accustomed to solving complex problems in time-critical situations, Eric realized that he wanted to forge a new path built upon his educational background in computers and business. An incessant desire to pursue information and understanding, combined with an inquisitive nature, ultimately pushed him toward the field of analytics.

Away from the professional world, Eric has a passion for computers, having built three of his own, as well as games of all forms, including family sessions of dominos and drawn out games of Civilization on his PC. He also remains grounded in reality by his two favorite sports teams, the Nebraska Cornhuskers and Newcastle United F.C., who continually find new ways to ruin his weekends.
Andrea has always had a passion for numbers and tennis. Since she was 12 years old, she enjoyed calculating the statistics involving the likelihood of winning a tennis match based on performance of amateur and professional tennis players, which helped her strategy inside the court. Her drive and determination helped her place in the top 15 national ranking in Mexico and earn a sports scholarship from Ashland University in Ohio to play tennis on the varsity women's team.

Being 1,400 miles away from home, she had to adapt to a new culture and environment in the academic as well as in the sports field. During her time at Ashland University she founded the Latin-Hispanic Club with the purpose of helping international minorities adapt. The club started with five initial members and expanded to 15 recurring members, all from different nationalities. Her excellent work ethic and previous volunteer experience led her to seek an RA position with the intention of helping her fellow students.

Andrea discovered the world of analytics during an internship at a pharmaceutical company. Eager to solve real-world problems and identify a need within the company, she took on the task of developing a price analysis for APIS and Finished Products. She was involved in the process of gathering, cleaning, and analyzing the data. After seeing her interest in analytics, her advisor suggested she pursue a career in that area.

Andrea loves to play piano and read historical books, both fiction and non-fiction, during her free time. Being an avid reader, her favorite book is La Catedral del Mar.
Zack Schwartz

Hometown: Newtown, Connecticut
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Brandeis University
  B.A., cum laude, Economics with minor in Business, 2011
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

As a child, Zack spent a lot of time reading The Complete Basketball Encyclopedia, and would recite the NBA’s all-time top scorers, assist leaders, and various other statistics to anyone who would listen. He also memorized facts from the Guinness Book of World Records. Did you know that the world’s tallest man was 8’11”? Zack had an affinity for math, and he especially enjoyed the subject when applied to the real world. His natural curiosity about the workings of the world and his aptitude for mathematics led him to choose economics as a major.

Zack is hard-working, dependable, and extremely detail-oriented. He enjoys finding patterns in data that others may have overlooked. In the five years after college graduation, Zack worked in marketing for three Boston area companies — Vistaprint, TripAdvisor, and edX. Digital marketing is truly a balance between art and a science, and over time, Zack found himself drawn more to the science side of the profession. In these positions, Zack had the opportunity to master Excel and to learn SQL and Tableau, but desired to delve deeper into the world of analytics and data science in order to better inform his understanding of this exciting field.

Aside from constructing statistical models, Zack enjoys running, cycling, volunteering, and traveling. He has participated in over 150 road races, at distances ranging from one mile to half marathon. Before coming to the Institute, Zack volunteered with Big Brothers Big Sisters for several years, mentoring a young adult with autism. He also had the opportunity to travel extensively around Europe when he studied abroad in London. While walking to class, Zack enjoys listening to economics and technology-related podcasts such as Marketplace and Planet Money.
Sindhura Sevala

Hometown: Toronto, Canada
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Duke University
  M.S., Molecular Cancer Biology, 2015
- North Carolina State University
  B.S., summa cum laude, Chemical Engineering with minor in Biomanufacturing, 2011; Valedictorian, University Scholars Program, Phi Kappa Phi
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Being a self-motivated, dedicated individual and a fast learner, Sindhura graduated from high school at the age of 15. Her versatility and thirst for knowledge led her to pursue degrees in engineering, biology, and analytics. In her engineering degree, her team created a prototype for their idea of a portable, fast cholera diagnostic device. Over the project course, she gained insight into business need identification and the formulation of the relevant conceptual solution into a product. She also learned how to divide the project into smaller tasks, organize and prioritize those tasks, and achieve task completion by focusing on both the bigger picture and the finer details.

During her pharmaceutical research training at Harvard and MIT, Sindhura observed that data generated from even the most advanced technique was incomprehensible without statistical analysis. She also noted that due to the disparity between biological research and statistics, scientists often struggled with identifying the statistical technique most appropriate for the respective experimental analysis. While the importance of statistics in making scientific discoveries sparked Sindhura’s interest in the field, her desire to simplify statistics into an understandable format and apply it to gain meaningful insight in other fields prompted her to pursue her current analytics degree.

Sindhura was born in Canada and raised in India and the U.S., which offers her a unique cultural perspective. Coming from an artistic family, she enjoys dance, scrapbooking, embroidery, coin collecting, and hopes to pass on these hobbies to the family’s next generation.
Bryan Shalloway

Hometown: Seattle, Washington
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Washington University in St. Louis
  B.A., cum laude, Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology with minors in American Culture Studies and Political Science, 2012
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Bryan loves investigating complex problems and learning from people. These qualities developed in high school when he began studying Alzheimer’s disease in a neuropathology research lab. His favorite times in the lab were spent between work benches brainstorming with his colleagues and pitching ideas back and forth with his mentor. Outside of the lab, Bryan focused his efforts on prosocial movements. As an undergraduate, he established a coaching program for local youth sports leagues, cofounded a data tracking initiative to promote reductions in energy use on campus, and worked with education leaders to open a new middle school in the city of St. Louis. Each of these projects started from relationships Bryan had developed with campus and community partners.

Bryan’s passion for learning and social equity motivated him to become a high school math teacher through Teach for America (TFA). In the classroom, Bryan shared his inner math nerd with his students. To peers, he was known as a content-knowledge expert and team player who took leadership roles both inside and outside of school. After completing his service term, Bryan was selected as an Education Pioneers Analyst Fellow where he used business intelligence methods to support local and state decision makers on topics ranging from academic improvement strategies to new school openings. Bryan attributes his success in these roles to his ability to frame questions and communicate across different levels, environments, and cultures in an organization.

Over breaks, Bryan loves visiting family and being the “fun uncle” to his six nieces and nephews. He also enjoys surprising his friends and loved ones with good-natured pranks.
Vandana Singh

Hometown: Delhi, India
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology
  Ph.D., Microbiology, 2003; M.S., Microbiology, 1999
- University of Lucknow
  B.S., Botany and Chemistry, 1996
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

In the midst of late-night coffee and long hours spent on experiments and projects for her Ph.D., Vandana discovered a personal truth that she can accomplish anything if she sets her mind to it. Working towards her goal of being an outstanding student, she received two national research awards, published 6 articles in highly influential scientific journals, and wrote a book chapter by the time she graduated. Vandana’s interest in data analytics started while analyzing the large amount of data she collected from experiments on pancreatic cancer drugs. Intrigued by the power of analytics, she took an online certification course in statistics and programming from NC State, strengthening her intent to pursue a career in the analytics field.

With her enthusiasm and perseverance in research, she was able to drive many projects to completion during her post-doctoral work, resulting in research publications and initiation of new research ideas. Furthermore, Vandana has managed many labs at the University of Illinois at Chicago and NC Central University. She was responsible for coordinating and supervising the research activities among team members. At one time she was entrusted with managing two labs simultaneously to lead a joint research project. Her colleagues and professors appreciated her helpful and dependable nature, high-quality performance, deep understanding of research problems, and openness to sharing knowledge. Many of her peers still contact her today for her opinion on their research activities.

Outside of work, Vandana enjoys camping at the Great Smoky Mountains and Jordan Lake, and hiking the nearby American Tobacco Trail with family and friends.
When Madison started playing soccer, she had no idea that it was going to become more than just a way to become active or to hang out with friends. She quickly developed a passion for the sport due to its competitive environment and the promise to become a part of something much bigger than herself. On the UMASS Women’s Soccer team, as a four-year starter, she helped her team earn three consecutive trips to the Atlantic 10 Conference Tournament. As a Division I athlete, member of the National College Athlete Honor Society, and a four-year recipient of an academic scholarship, Madison mastered priority setting, time management skills, and the work ethic required to achieve at a high level in all of her pursuits.

During her internship, at one of the nation’s leading aerospace companies, Madison successfully applied her teamwork skills to work with another intern to develop a standardized mechanism to extract the inventory turnover for 24,000 engine parts. Using SQL, Excel, and Visio, the team was able to analyze the data and identify the “danger” parts with excess inventory. This experience lured Madison into the world of data discovery as she delved into how data can be used for decision making, planning, and forecasting.

In addition to soccer, Madison enjoys discovering different cultures and serving in her community. She has traveled to Spain, Dominican Republic, and a few of the Caribbean islands. Most recently, Madison was involved in a committee to help establish UMASS as an official Special Olympics college. In the future, she hopes to continue her worldly travels, as well as outreach to her local community.

Madison Smith

Hometown: Bristow, Virginia
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of Massachusetts at Amherst
  B.B.A., cum laude, Operations and Information Management with minors in Mathematics and Spanish, 2016; General Studies Honors
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016
Creativity, analysis, and a competitive drive motivated Brett to take over a business franchise and build it to a top five performer in the international chain, while still finishing his undergraduate degree. These innate qualities drove him to use the same business as a catalyst to raise food each month for the local food bank. As a result, the business gathered and donated over two tons of food every year earning a community award for this contribution.

His interest in creative solutions, combined with his affinity for quantitative analysis, led him to a social impact investment firm that focused on finding unique solutions to societal problems. Brett worked on a wide range of projects, from developing financial models for a mega-dairy to building an impact investment network that was recognized by Forbes. These rigorous projects increased his aptitude for using facts and figures to find answers to difficult questions. While finishing his MBA, Brett took a graduate class in data analytics that perfectly integrated the seemingly disparate approaches of utilizing creativity and quantitative analysis to gain insights to business problems. This combination of methods was a perfect reflection of Brett’s interests, abilities, and experiences, and he has been hooked on analytics ever since.

Outside of work, he loves getting outdoors to a scenic area for a day of hiking, picture-taking, and exploring with his wife, kids, and dog. Brett also enjoys experiencing different cultures. He has a goal of learning to cook all of his favorite international dishes and is currently working on perfecting sushi rolls.
Growing up, Morgan would share trivia with anyone who would listen. She loved discovering new information and wasn’t satisfied until she had in-depth answers to her questions, regardless of the topic. This desire for knowledge continued into adulthood and served her well throughout her time as an undergraduate as she applied her skills in mathematics and computer science to a variety of subjects.

Morgan first realized that data analytics combined all of her academic interests while conducting research as a member of her professor’s synthetic biology team. She was responsible for deriving insight from the team’s experimental data and communicating these technical results to a wide range of audiences. The interdisciplinary nature of this experience stood out to Morgan and she became excited about the seemingly endless uses for her analytical skills.

As an intern with the City of Raleigh’s Open Data program the following summer, she continued exploring this new path, this time incorporating her interest in projects with societal impacts. While collaborating with the Code for Raleigh organization, Morgan was further introduced to the large network of local data analysts volunteering their knowledge to improve their communities. Through her internship, she contributed to this effort by developing an algorithm to locate affordable housing in order to better inform the city’s planning departments.

Outside of academics, Morgan enjoys theater and can often be found singing along to her latest favorite musical. As a proud North Carolina native, she also loves eating anything barbecued or fried — especially if it comes with sweet tea.
Christopher St. Jeor

Hometown: Wrightwood, California
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Brigham Young University-Idaho
  B.S., Economics, 2014
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

A chance encounter with economics in college unlocked Chris’ fascination with the power of data, developing a drive to learn all he could about analytics and apply his newfound knowledge to the world around him. The idea that data could change the world became a very real concept as he worked with a small team to develop a model showing effective ways to reduce crime rates. The project, which earned Chris second place in an undergraduate research competition, inspired him to continue using data to identify actionable outcomes.

As an economist for the Idaho Department of Labor, Chris became well known for his enthusiasm and ability to digest large amounts of data and clearly communicate his findings. His ability to interpret data and identify actionable insights and then disseminate critical findings to media outlets, business leaders, and state legislators led to economic growth. Chris’ creative use of resources and willingness to embrace challenges directly improved the services the public received while also reducing the department’s budget by $100,000 a year.

Chris’ enthusiasm for analytics is only rivaled by his enthusiasm for his family. Whether hiking mountain trails, exploring a new museum, or comparing cannonballs into the pool, he is constantly on the move with his wife and two kids. Each day Chris teaches his children to fully engage with life and embrace every challenge as an opportunity for growth.
When it comes to analytics, it was love at first regression for Jordan. During his undergraduate education, an advanced econometrics course demonstrated to him that a reliance on opinion and punditry was unnecessary – he could analyze numbers to interpret and predict behavior instead. With a newfound keenness for making informed decisions and the discovery of an aptitude in analytics, he began a career in data science.

After graduation, Jordan worked at a political consulting firm where he developed his data talents and grew as a leader. Starting as a polling analyst specializing in data visualization, he took advantage of every opportunity to learn additional data manipulation tools, such as Python and SQL. Jordan was soon promoted to a Project Manager and led a team of five. This role revealed to him an affinity for automating and optimizing processes as he learned to simplify operations to fit the election cycle timeframe. For instance, in one election cycle he led his team in creating a streamlined process to stratify, field, and analyze twenty polls every week for ten weeks. Because his team consisted of entry-level employees, he coordinated weekly trainings to teach statistics and data concepts. Witnessing the growth and success of his team taught Jordan the value of mentoring and training.

Even when he’s not at work, Jordan recognizes the value in being a team player. He can often be found volunteering for his church or playing basketball with friends. Of course, he looks forward to coming home to his most important teammate (his wife) and dancing in the kitchen with his daughter.
Ever since childhood, Kaili has had a passion for learning; it was evident from her enjoyment of math workbooks and educational computer games, rather than coloring books and dolls. This theme remained constant throughout her youth and after taking an AP statistics course in high school, Kaili knew that she wanted to pursue a degree working with math. During her time as an undergraduate at NC State University, she enjoyed the challenge of analyzing data and utilizing statistical tools.

As an intern at the US Environmental Protection Agency, Kaili developed a model to predict vulnerability to dust storms in Arizona under a changing climate scenario. It was during this internship that she realized she was quick to learn new coding languages and adapt to new situations. Kaili also learned that she had a passion for working with large data sets, complex problems, and analytical techniques. After presenting her findings at a conference and working on a research paper, she realized that she wanted to continue to improve her skills with a master's degree in analytics.

After spending most of her day working on the computer, Kaili enjoys spending time outdoors. You can usually find her in a hammock reading a fantasy book when the weather is nice. She enjoys water skiing, wake boarding, and inner tubing at Kerr Lake with her family. Kaili also enjoys traveling and spent a month in Great Britain, exploring England, Wales, and Scotland with friends.
Throughout college, John established himself as both an academic and social leader. His peers voted to award him the Peter R. Lord Textile Engineering Design Leadership Award for his leadership and creativity in his Senior Design class and project. As a graduating senior, he was selected by the faculty to receive the Harry Ball Honor Award in recognition of outstanding scholarship, character, and leadership within the College of Textiles. John finished his college career as a valedictorian with a double major in engineering.

His interest in analytics and data started with his first programming class in Excel and VBA. He solidified his direction and interest in analytics through his internship with HanesBrands in their advanced modeling and simulation team. There, he was able to work with large data sets and build optimization models. To further enhance his technical experience, he chose to intern for Boeing’s IT department where he built an application that queried information from multiple databases into a user form to aid in first time quality of record submission and review. This journey helped John discover his interest in manipulating data and laid the foundation for a career in analytics.

In his free time John loves being active. Whether he is hiking and geocaching in the Swiss Alps, fishing off the coast of North Carolina, or playing a game of ultimate Frisbee, he makes the most of his spare time outdoors. He also enjoys the craft of woodworking and is currently interested in restoring antique tools and learning more about the art of carpentry.
Although Laura's undergraduate career began in the sciences, it was a required statistics course where she recognized that math was her true passion. With her new identity as a math major, Laura’s love for learning and problem solving was ignited. She found likeminded classmates who appreciated her clever puns, as well as professors who encouraged her curiosity to explore connections between the fields of math and psychology. The analytical skills Laura obtained through her diverse coursework were further developed during a semester at University College London. Navigating throughout European cities allowed Laura an opportunity to utilize her strong reasoning skills while exploring new cultures.

Laura embodies a passionate and genuine approach to problem solving. This proved invaluable as she entered the professional setting. Working for three years at Partners Healthcare on a monumental, multi-hospital electronic health record implementation, Laura found her niche working “magic” with Excel and SQL to meet intensive timelines. While providing efficient solutions, she enjoyed teaching her teammates how to understand nuances and trends within the legacy clinical data of millions of patients. A diligent work ethic and positive attitude allowed Laura to provide support to end-users with varied backgrounds.

As a side effect of working in downtown Boston, lengthy train commutes turned Laura into an avid reader. She passed endless hours on the Green Line reading books about statistics, economics, and human behavior. As an outlet from work and school, Laura enjoys running at sunrise, coaching youth lacrosse, and searching for new ice cream spots.
Logan Teal

Hometown: Holly Springs, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- Old Dominion University
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Logan was in a swimming pool before he was able to crawl. This sparked a rewarding relationship that ingrained the principles of hard work and dedication, leading him to compete for Old Dominion University’s Swimming team. Co-captain both junior and senior years, he led the Men’s Swimming and Diving team through the physical, mental, and emotional challenges of Division I athletics. Selected to the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Logan promoted the well-being of student athletes by communicating their wants and needs to university administrators.

Logan was introduced to the field of analytics through his undergraduate studies in finance and was captivated by its applicability to the decision-making process. Intrigued and eager to learn, Logan added a second major in business analytics. During an internship with Kotarides Property Management, he implemented company policies to better manage the data that the company was collecting. Logan was also exposed to visual mapping of land acquisition and property database management, gaining critical knowledge of how data drove decisions across the organization.

Logan recently completed a solo cycling tour covering 600 miles from North Carolina to Pennsylvania. He seeks adventure and finds fascination exploring new locations by bicycle. Logan enjoys pushing the limits of both body and mind and is currently training to compete in triathlons.
Garrett Tomlinson

Hometown: Louisburg, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.S., Mathematical Decision Sciences, 2016
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

As an Eagle Scout who grew up on a horse farm, Garrett has always been the type of person to roll up his sleeves and be hands-on with any challenge. This has proven true in his personal endeavors as well as his professional life. When he took an interest in cooking he fully invested himself and now boasts the ability to create many dishes from duck confit to Carolina-style BBQ.

Garrett is an ambitious individual who has always looked to get the most out of any experience. Taking what he knew about football and statistics he was able to build a predictive model for NFL games. This model predicted the correct outcome over 60% of the time for the 2015 playoffs. In college, he found his niche in classes focused on operations, logistics, and analytics. The ability he demonstrated in those classes caught the attention of his future mentor, Harvey Wagner, who offered him a spot on a Ph.D. student’s independent study. Working together with the Ph.D. student he learned how to build models with decision trees and apply them to investigate marketing campaigns. The outcome of the independent study was the identification of thematic trends across different countries for the sponsor company’s campaigns.

Garrett plans to apply his talents and assertive attitude to his professional life and, eventually, follow in the footsteps of his mentor by participating in a project worthy of the esteemed Franz Edelman Award.
Peter Valenta

Hometown: Frostburg, Maryland
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of Maryland, College Park
  B.A., Economics with minor in Actuarial Mathematics, 2015
- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Peter went into his first calculus course thinking it would also be his last. He had always done well in math, but was primarily interested in business and economics at the time. However, during the calculus course he became fascinated while learning about the application of math in solving business problems. Peter decided to take additional courses in math and statistics, eventually completing a minor in actuarial mathematics.

Peter is driven by self-motivation and a love of learning. As a research assistant in economic forecasting, he developed a passion for using data as a tool to learn about the world. He gained valuable experience in empirical economics by gathering economic data, creating visualizations, and building data banks for use in forecast models. Learning about the tools and methods used to create models in economics motivated Peter to develop his skills in data analysis. In addition to his regular coursework, he began to take online courses in R and Python programming. He applied these skills by analyzing fantasy football data to predict player performance and went on to win his league.

In his free time, Peter enjoys reading about economics, history, and technology. Economics has given him an interest in currencies, reflected by his collection of coins from over 100 countries. He also loves to play and watch soccer. He wakes up early on weekends to root for Tottenham, his favorite soccer team.
Discovering multi-dimensional vector spaces in her first linear algebra class changed the course of Sharon’s life and led her to major in math. She remembers the feeling of endless insights and possibilities opening before her as her world expanded beyond three dimensions. This awakening launched her into a career in software engineering, developing textual analysis tools to improve software development productivity.

From masterminding a fundraising plan for her Girl Scout troop to travel to Quebec to writing the business plan for a successful startup fitness center, she has a lifelong enthusiasm for data-driven business strategy. This interest motivated Sharon to transition into management consulting, where she advised companies on diverse issues including new market opportunities and product line strategy. Her zeal for data science was sparked when she experimented with selling on eBay, focusing on hard-to-find toys during the holiday season. When insights from analytics led her to profitable segments such as marketing LEGO sets to the west coast and Bratz dolls to the UK and France, Sharon realized that she had found her calling in analytics.

Sharon’s passion for travel and exploring other cultures has led her to 27 countries on three continents, including six months spent studying at the Pushkin Institute in Moscow. She also enjoys whitewater rafting, and has paddled the Green and Colorado rivers through the Cataract and Grand Canyons. An executive editor and humor columnist for her business school newspaper, she later published a humor piece in an anthology of Southern writers. In her spare time, she enjoys short hikes around the Raleigh area with her dog, hot vinyasa yoga, and crafting jewelry.
Does the thought of travelling alone to a foreign country 7,000 miles away sound terrifying to you? At the age of 18, Daniel traveled away from his family in China to the United States and quickly adapted to his new college life. By working hard and embracing the American culture, he was able to achieve success in and out of class. As a result, he was inducted into Eta Kappa Nu, the international electrical and computer engineering honor society of IEEE.

During his undergraduate study, Daniel and his team worked with a local orthodontist to prove the concept of embedding Bluetooth technology into dental fixtures. With his strong problem-solving skills, he was able to turn the orthodontist’s idea into a working prototype. He also brought a fried circuit prototype back to life and was able to prevent the project from going over budget. Besides engineering, his analytical nature drove him to pursue a minor in statistics. After working on a model building project involving making predictions of commercial building energy usage, he realized how analytics can be applied to the real world and it sparked his interest in the field.

After analyzing data and solving problems during the day, Daniel enjoys playing basketball to stay active. He also has a love for nature and outdoor activities, especially going fishing and camping during the weekends. In the past six years, Daniel has traveled to 16 states in the US and hopes to finish traveling to all 50 states soon.
Raised in a tight-knit military family, Max grew up moving around the United States and Germany, comfortable in new situations and always adapting. As a student, chemistry and biology satisfied his need to understand the world around him. Pursuing his passion, Max was the top graduate in biochemistry at Seattle University. He fell in love with the philosophy of science and developed the foundation of his analytical mind in research, crafting high-quality answers to complex biochemical questions. In the lab, Max recombinantly expressed and characterized an enzyme from the diatom, *T. Pseudonana*, and was motivated to develop a new protocol that not only increased output, but also established him as a self-learner.

After taking a course in C++, Max was introduced to a proteomic data mining project. Fixated, he learned Python to fetch protein sequences, process, and visualize networks of motifs. Max instantly recognized how dynamic programming and statistics were combined with another field. This became his new focus, shifting his interests and defining his path toward analytics.

While taking the needed statistics prerequisites, Max briefly moonlighted as a tax professional, taught Sunday school, tutored chemistry, and explored his creative side by making pottery to his heart’s content and consuming massive amounts of fiction. Max gets satisfaction from exercising, keeping his body and mind healthy, running outdoors, and lifting. He takes pride in matching his intellect with charisma and enjoys making people laugh. Max’s greatest passion is his family; he loves being a son, brother, and adoring uncle to his nieces. His signature is a happy smile, his favorite thing to do.
Nick Weimer

Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  B.A., with Distinction, Chemistry with minor in Biology, 2015

- SAS Certified Advanced Programmer, 2017
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016
- AWS (Amazon Web Services) Solutions Architect- Associate, 2017

Growing up, Nick always had a knack for overcoming adversity, displaying leadership, and making a difference. Throughout high school he played lacrosse and football, but was challenged when three, back-to-back knee surgeries over a two-year period limited his time on the field. He surmounted the setback, returned to the field, and received all-conference honors in lacrosse as a senior team captain.

He entered UNC with a passion to learn more about orthopedics so that he could help other athletes with similar misfortunes. He found success studying chemistry and mathematics, and quickly discovered his strength for quantitative analysis. Eager to make a difference in the community, Nick obtained his EMT license while being a full-time student at UNC. He used his newly acquired skill set immediately by volunteering as a nurse at the Interfaith Council Men’s Shelter as well as volunteering in Nicaragua on a mission trip. He was especially touched by the welcoming nature of the natives of Nicaragua, particularly an 85-year old, home-bound woman who welcomed the medical team into her home. Upon further reflection and meeting with dozens of doctors, Nick felt his quantitative skill set could have the greatest impact in an analytical career path, so he transitioned from medicine to analytics.

His love for mathematics and sports merged into becoming the business analytics intern at the Charlotte Hornets/Greensboro Swarm upon graduation. While interning, Nick enjoyed leading a team of ten interns in running a promotional reading day at a Greensboro elementary school. In his free time, Nick enjoys playing fantasy football, teaching himself songs on the piano, and reading a wide range of nonfiction topics including statistical coding, world history, and investing.
Throughout his personal and professional life, Ryan has been driven by his curiosity, a sense of adventure, and an appetite for new challenges. The Boy Scouts became an early outlet for him to fulfill this drive through pursuits such as leading a team of scouts to build bat houses for his Eagle Scout service project and taking bold trips, such as backcountry hiking in the mountains of New Mexico and island living in the Florida Keys. He has carried the same adventurous spirit to the present, running in half-marathons and 10Ks, and most recently hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu in Peru.

In his career, Ryan has combined his love for new challenges with a reputation for thinking outside the box and discovering novel solutions to complex problems. He first began considering a career in analytics as an undergrad while working as a summer co-op at DuPont on a business intelligence team, and came to enjoy the complexities of grappling with large databases.

After graduating from Virginia Tech, Ryan continued to hone his analytical skills at Fidelity Investments for three years. While there, he had the opportunity to work on several data-driven projects such as automating the archival of millions of financial records to improve system performance, redesigning job workflows to reduce systematic data processing errors and reduce maintenance overheads, and implementing new measurement tags to gather data on user activity on the company website. Ryan is looking forward to building on his past experiences and tackling new problems in the field of advanced analytics.
Work ethic is not taught, it is instilled. James internalized this value while working on the family ranch throughout his childhood summers. While the ranch founded his strong work ethic, it was the hours spent sweating under the hot sun that spurred his desire for efficiency. These characteristics quickly combined and led James through his education and early career.

After gaining empirical knowledge driving tractors and welding, James’ degree in mechanical engineering furthered his expertise in kinetics and thermodynamics. With this he merged mathematics, physics, and practical knowledge to create more efficient mechanical processes.

The complexity of challenges James faced grew exponentially as he started constructing power plants across the country as a field engineer. Finding best practices in system design, project management, and construction was critical to success. To accomplish this required James’ focus and mechanical skills to transfer to the digital world by creating and managing piping databases. These databases minimized time, capital, and material consumed throughout the construction process. James’ coworkers often complimented him on his simple and streamlined solutions.

When he is not creating a more efficient world, James is exploring it. Whether in a new city, neighboring state, or distant country, he always makes time to stop at a local coffee shop and bakery. At home, James is up early every morning training for his upcoming half marathon, and eagerly awaits winter to ski steep moguls in the Rockies.
Dustin Wicker

Hometown: Sanford, North Carolina
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION

- North Carolina State University
  B.S., magna cum laude, Civil Engineering, 2013
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
- SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
- SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Dustin’s adventurous attitude and curiosity for learning has led him to travel around the globe. His most unforgettable trips include a college spring break spent in Costa Rica where he trekked through the rain forest while learning about sustainability; as well as a study abroad semester in Italy, which included trips to the Colosseum, Eiffel Tower, and Turkish baths in Budapest.

This insatiable curiosity, along with hard work and dependability allowed him to excel at his first job as a civil design engineer for Duke Energy at the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant. While there, he worked on a variety of different teams, completing tasks that ranged from evaluating rigging configurations and load path layouts to analyzing relay quantities for preventative maintenance optimization. The work he performed opened his eyes to the power of data collection and analysis. With this newfound knowledge, along with his natural, intellectual curiosity and his passion for helping people, Dustin was inspired to look for an opportunity that could combine his interests. After researching and talking with friends, Dustin discovered the power of analytics and how it could be used to improve the world around him. This discovery transformed his career aspirations and led to his overall goal of utilizing data to improve people’s lives.

When he is not working or exploring exciting destinations, Dustin enjoys playing tennis, basketball, and lifting weights. An avid electronic dance music fan, he loves to go to local concerts and music festivals.
Matthew Wright
Hometown: Santa Cruz, California
Citizenship: U.S.

EDUCATION
- University of California at Santa Barbara
  B.S., Statistical Science, 2010
- SAS Certified Base Programmer, 2016
  SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst, 2016
  SAS Certified Predictive Modeler, 2016

Even from an early age Matt showed an abundant interest in numbers. He would collect football cards and loved to examine the statistics on the back just as much as he did his favorite players’ pictures on the front. Matt would arrange cards by team and then by the players with the best statistics. He didn’t realize it then, but this passion for numbers would drive him to major in statistics and then pursue analytics as a career.

After graduating he worked for a non-profit that served special needs children and adults. He honed in on developing multiple databases with a front-end application interface requiring the use of SQL, VBA, and cloud-based data storage. Matt then leveraged this experience at his next job as a data analyst to create stunning, real-time visualizations and dashboards. An almost immediate transformation occurred in how the team looked at and gained insights from data. He also leveraged R programming and Shiny Server to create front and backend applications to allow easy insights into trends as well as automate redundant tasks. This freed up his teammates’ time allowing them to take a deeper dive into data.

This passion for analytics doesn’t stop at work or school for he has been analyzing the stock market for years and really enjoys the challenges that are associated with it. Outside of analytics, Matt loves to take it all that nature has to offer. Whether it is hiking Garrapata on the coast of California or camping near a beautiful lake or river, he always finds a moment to reflect.