



## WSS NEWS

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# WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

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## **VOLUNTEER FOR WSS!**

### **WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY SEEKS VITAL VOLUNTEER POSITIONS**

The Society currently has several critical vacancies for various WSS committees. I encourage you to read over the descriptions below and consider volunteering.

I believe the involvement in WSS from a committee perspective will prove very rewarding. To volunteer, please contact Nancy Bates, 2013-2014 WSS President.

~Nancy Bates, WSS President  
[nancy.a.bates@census.gov](mailto:nancy.a.bates@census.gov) or 301 763-5248

#### ***WSS webmaster***

Dan Jacobs has been the WSS webmaster since the 90's. Understandably so, Dan has expressed a desire to step down. The Webmaster has long been a key role at WSS. The webmaster maintains the website and posts materials provided by officer and committees. The webmaster also develops, maintains, and runs the scripts that implement our annual and special elections.

The WSS webmaster should have knowledge of current web technologies and pay careful attention to detail. Ideally, he or she will be familiar with WordPress, Drupal, Joomla, or other content management systems so he or she can help decentralize website maintenance. The webmaster should also know php so she or he can implement, maintain, and improve the scripts we use for elections and other special purposes.

#### ***Curtis Jacobs Memorial Award Committee Chair***

The Curtis Jacobs Award provides encouragement for students to gain an understanding and appreciation of statistical science and its use. The Chair works with other WSS volunteers to advertise the award and recruit projects at Science Fairs in Maryland, DC and Northern Virginia. The Chair also helps recruit judges and arrange the awards. The outgoing Chair, Tom Krenzke, has indicated willingness to help mentor the new incoming volunteer. If you are interested in helping promote knowledge of the statistical process (e.g., data collection, surveys, analysis) with students, please consider volunteering for this extremely important committee chair!

#### ***Social Committee Co-Chair***

Since 2012, Frank Yu has been at the helm of the WSS Social Committee (and doing a terrific job). However, Frank could use a co-chair to ease some of his work. Social committee responsibilities include arranging for an annual holiday event, the annual awards dinner, and food for the Morris Hansen Lecture. If you enjoy event planning, please consider this position.

***Quantitative Literacy Volunteer Coordinator***

The QL volunteer coordinator recruits volunteers, maintains a database of volunteers, and responds to requests for volunteers for QL events. The coordinator writes articles about QL volunteer opportunities for the WSS newsletter and will work closely with the QL Committee Chair, Dhuly Chowdhury. This position is not too time consuming and good for members who want to “test the committee waters” so to speak.

***Short Course Committee Members***

Volunteers are sought to help research topics for new short courses and names of potential instructors. Committee members will help the Chair develop budgets and cost of conducting courses, arrange for locations, create course announcements, arrange for course materials, and facilitate class registration. Brian Meekins is currently the Short Course Committee Chair and would welcome committee members to help organize more WSS sponsored short courses.

**NOT TO BE MISSED!****10<sup>TH</sup> Annual Economic Measurement Seminar**

**Hosted by the National Association for Business Economics  
Arlington, Virginia  
July 29 & 30, 2013**

All members of the WSS community are welcome to attend this very informative seminar. The Economic Measurement Seminar focuses on the availability of both public and private sources of data, strengths and weaknesses of data and how to use the data to make informed decisions.

This unique seminar pairs data producers with prominent data users to provide an insightful view of how data are compiled and how they are utilized by leading analysts.

There are a number of benefits to attending the Seminar:

- Attendees will learn about the various sources of data available from the Federal Government directly from the producers of the data.
- Attendees will learn about new sources of data and the challenges and opportunities associated with data.
- Attendees will leave with a thorough understanding of important macroeconomic indicators such as employment, unemployment, inflation, GDP and the National Accounts among others (for example, in my professional capacity as Associate Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, I will be giving the seminar on inflation measures).
- Through the plenary sessions, attendees will gain a wider perspective on social and demographic changes, seasonal adjustment and ethics.
- The opportunity to network with other professionals in their field.
- A customized learning environment affording my Analysts the opportunity to choose the sessions most suited to their needs.
- The content is approved for CFA Continuing Education Credit.

Training budgets in the Federal Government and in the private sector could be tight, but the Economic Measurement Seminar remains one of the best deals in the industry thanks to support from The NABE Foundation.

The NABE member and the Government employee rate is \$549; included in that rate:

- 14 hours of seminar content
- Customized learning experience with two educational tracks to choose from

- The NABE Foundation's Certificate in Economic Measurement
- 2 Lunches with prominent speakers (Richard Berner from the Department of Treasury and Michael Mandel from Progressive Policy Institute)
- Networking coffee breaks, breakfasts, and a networking reception

Even if your staff has to travel, NABE is conveniently located at the Crystal City Sheraton in Arlington, VA:

- Minutes from Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA)
- Accessible by a free airport shuttle
- Located on the Washington, DC Metro line linked to Amtrak via Union Station
- Only \$199 per night, very reasonable by DC metro area standards

For a complete program and a list of speakers please visit NABE's website at <http://nabe.com/EMS2013>.

If you would like someone from NABE to send you a printed brochure or if you have any additional questions please contact Tara Munroe at the NABE office, [tmunroe@nabe.com](mailto:tmunroe@nabe.com).

## **Summer Conference Preview/2013 Review**

**Hosted by the DC-Baltimore Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the Washington Statistical Society**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC**

**July 30-31, 2013**

We know you can't travel to every conference, so DC-AAPOR and WSS are teaming up to bring you a sample of exemplary presentations (both talks and posters) taking place at this year's national conferences. At the 2013 Summer Conference Preview/Review, you will get the opportunity share your work, hear what others are doing, and socialize with colleagues. (A happy hour with a complimentary bar will be held on the first evening of the conference a few blocks away at the 201 Bar.)

### **Preliminary Program**

The preliminary program is attached.

### **Registration**

Please register for this two-day conference soon. Registration is open to everyone, but presenters get a discount. Registration prices are as follows:

- Student Presenters: \$25.00
- Presenters: \$40.00
- Early Bird Student/Retirees: \$35.00
- Early Bird DC-AAPOR and WSS Members: \$50.00
- Early Bird Non-Members: \$75.00
- Late (after July 19) Student/Retirees: \$60.00
- Late (after July 19) DC-AAPOR and WSS Members: \$75.00
- Late (after July 19) Non-Members: \$100.00

### **Conference Sponsorships**

We are seeking conference sponsors at the \$500, \$1,000 and \$2,000 levels. For more information, visit <http://www.dc-aapor.org/events.php> or contact Jill Lacey, DC-AAPOR Treasurer ([jnlacey1@comcast.net](mailto:jnlacey1@comcast.net)). Sponsor names and logos will appear on all future event announcements and in the program, so sign up early!

### **Questions?**

Please contact the conference chair, Gina Walejko, at [gina.k.walejko@census.gov](mailto:gina.k.walejko@census.gov).

**WSS MEMBERS ON THE MOVE!****WSS Members Elected as Fellows of the  
American Statistical Association**

I am pleased to announce that seven members of the Washington Statistical Society were recently elected as Fellows of the American Statistical Association. ASA Fellowship is a broad recognition of an individual's contribution to the field of statistics, the statistical profession, and the ASA. Congratulations to each of our new Fellows, who continue the tradition of strong WSS representation among those elected as Fellows. These new Fellows will be honored at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Montreal.

Patrick Cantwell	U.S. Census Bureau
William Guthrie	National Institute of Standards & Technology
Mel Kollander	
Lisa McShane	National Cancer Institute
Polly Phipps	Bureau of Labor Statistics
Maria Matilde Sanchez-Kam	Arena Pharmaceuticals
Mahlet Tadesse	Georgetown University, Department of Mathematics

~Keith Rust  
WSS President 2012-13

## WSS HOSTS SHORT COURSE

### INTRODUCTION TO R

**October 15, 2013, 9:00am – 4:30pm**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC**

This course introduces R to those who are interested in using R for their statistical analysis and have little or no prior experience using R. R is open-source software that is widely used in the statistical community. It provides a flexible platform for both analysts who prefer performing analysis with pre-packaged functions and those who wish to develop their own routines. Because of its open-source nature and flexibility, many R&D and academic researchers have been developing R packages and functions for state of the art statistical methods. R is also highly customizable for producing visual presentations.

The course will cover four introductory subjects: R basic operations, data manipulation, univariate statistics and simple graphics. The goal of the course is to provide sufficient fundamental knowledge to start using R and enable users to further advance their knowledge of R from various sources as desired.

The format of the course will include lecture and hands-on opportunities. Participants are encouraged to bring their own laptops with R installed (<http://www.r-project.org/>).

**Who Should Attend:** This course is designed for those who are interested in using R for their statistical analysis with little or no prior experience using R.

**About the Instructor:** Cha-Chi Fan is a Mathematical Statistician from the US Energy Information Administration. Her work has focused on dynamic system modeling and simulation, uncertainty and risk assessments, and spatial methods.

**Course Topics:** R Basic Operations, Data Manipulation, Univariate Statistics, Simple Graphics

**Registration Fee:** Full-Time Students \$40, WSS Members \$150, Other Registrants \$200

**Course Contact:** Brian Meekins, [meekins.brian@bls.gov](mailto:meekins.brian@bls.gov)



# AN ENLIGHTENING EVENING WAS HAD BY ALL!

## Scenes from the WSS Cox Award and Annual Dinner



## SEMINARS

**Title:** **Uncommon Knowledge Through Visualization**

**Date/time:** **August 7, 2013, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.**

**Speaker:** Kevin Patrick, Nautilytics, LLC.

**Chair:** Mike Fleming

**Sponsor:** WSS Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Location:**

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center.

To be placed on the seminar list attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to [wss\\_seminar@bls.gov](mailto:wss_seminar@bls.gov) (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station.

**Abstract:**

Around the world, there are thousands of organizations using large secondary datasets. Currently, users in these organizations are able to navigate and analyze databases, and then present their output. But the process is highly disjointed. Visualization is only used to a limited extent to present output and is not leveraged for deeper learning. Users currently access databases in a traditional manner: once concluding their search; they export those data, perform statistical analysis if required, and transfer to presentation software. I will discuss methods to improve the analysis of large secondary datasets using visualization methods.

There is a tradeoff between sophistication of analysis and usability; the "upside down pyramid problem". For example, there are great databases but delving deeply is time consuming and cumbersome. Or there are powerful database analysis software tools, but the necessary heavy investment is done by a few key technical employees. The same can be said for high-end visualization tools that stand apart from sophisticated database management and modeling tools. I will show you how to turn the pyramid right side up using an integrated gaming environment that allows more users to become intimate with the data, and as a result, the level of analysis and the deepness of the learning is much greater.

Visualization of data using a video gaming platform will make database search inductive, whereby users learn during search and analysis. This is the active discovery and unique insight process. I will use for an example global food demand trends in Asia which involves a dense data set of many smaller countries and their unique food trends. A search of it is more cumbersome without explicit direction, or alternatively it can be made easy using a highly visual environment. Gaming architecture is conducive to the full spectrum of search routines; ad hoc, exploratory, error making, comparative statistics, and hypothesis testing; not just deductive directed search.

**Point of Contact:** Kevin Patrick, [kpatric2@gmail.com](mailto:kpatric2@gmail.com)

**Title:** **The 2013 Roger Herriot Award: The 1973 Exact Match Study**

**Date/Time:** **September 17, 2013, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.**  
Light refreshments will be served following the talk  
\* Video conferencing will **not** be available.

**Chair:** Fritz Scheuren, NORC at the University of Chicago

**Some Remembrance:**

TBA, U.S. Census Bureau  
Benjamin Bridges, U.S. Social Security Administration  
Peter Sailer, U.S. Internal Revenue Service (Consultant)

**Exact Match Study Today:**

Bertram Kestenbaum, U.S. Social Security Administration

**Location:**

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Room 2  
To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to [wss\\_seminar@bls.gov](mailto:wss_seminar@bls.gov) (underscore after 'wss') **by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar**, or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station.

**Abstract:**

It has been almost 20 years since the untimely death of Roger Herriot. Throughout his career at the National Center for Education Statistics and earlier at the U.S. Census Bureau, Roger demonstrated an enduring commitment to improving federal statistical data and encouraging fresh and original approaches to developing new and better data sources. It was, therefore, most appropriate that his passing should lead to the establishment of the Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics, which is “intended to recognize individuals or teams who, like Roger, develop unique and innovative approaches to the solution of statistical problems in federal data collection programs.”

This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a unique project that not only encapsulates the kind of innovation that Roger Herriot was recognized for. He actually co-led the effort which continues, even now, to draw on the cooperative spirit and creativity of federal statisticians and economists from multiple agencies. This was the 1973 Current Population Survey (CPS) - Internal Revenue Service (IRS) - Social Security Administration (SSA) Exact Match Study.

The 1973 Exact Match Study was a joint undertaking of the SSA and the Census Bureau that linked survey records for persons in the March 1973 CPS to their respective earnings and benefit information in SSA administrative records and, with full IRS cooperation, to selected items from 1972 IRS individual income tax returns. All three agencies offered staff to work on the undertaking, so it was an interagency effort, not just something done by isolated individuals. Needless to say, careful disclosure safeguards, both physical and legal, were imposed. This first-of-its-kind initiative not only encouraged better cooperation among statistical agencies, but also helped to kick-start major advances in record linkage techniques and important research into the use of administrative data to improve survey methods and output. Research with these and other data sets continues to this day.

In recognition of this seminal interagency work, the 1973 Exact Match Study was selected as this year's winner of the Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics. To celebrate that event, WSS will hold a special session at the BLS Conference Center. Alumni of the Exact Match Study and subsequent users of the data are especially encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served. Join us in commemorating this well-deserved honor and re-connect with old friends!

# CONFERENCE



## **Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) Research Conference**

**November 4-6, 2013**

**Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC**

Registration is now **OPEN** and the advance program is available for the **2013 Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) Research Conference**! This three-day conference will bring together researchers in the statistical community from government, private sector, and academia to discuss and exchange current research and methodological topics relevant to statistical programs.

The conference will offer papers on a wide range of topics including:

Adaptive survey design  
Address-based sampling  
Administrative records  
Bayesian statistical methods  
Coding  
Confidentiality and disclosure  
Crowdsourcing  
Data quality  
Economic statistics  
Editing  
Frame development

Imputation  
Mobile devices  
Multi-mode and web data collection  
Nonresponse and measurement error  
Paradata and metadata  
Questionnaire and survey design  
Record linkage  
Small area estimation  
Survey redesign  
Variance estimation  
Weighting

**Registration:** An early registration fee of \$175 applies through September 30, 2013. The regular registration fee of \$195 applies starting October 1, 2013. To register on-line, go to the [conference registration website](#).

**Advanced Program:** Visit the [FCSM Web site](#) or the [COPAFS Web site](#) to view the advance program.

For questions or more information, email [fcm.conf@gmail.com](mailto:fcm.conf@gmail.com)

## SHORT COURSES

### Short Course Sponsored by Joint Program in Survey Methodology

Course and registration information for all JPSM-sponsored short courses listed below are available at [www.jpsm.org/shortcourses](http://www.jpsm.org/shortcourses).

#### **Small Area Estimation**

**SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2013**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Partha Lahiri

**Payment and Registration Due by August 29, 2013**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=091213](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=091213)

#### **Balancing Data Confidentiality and Data Quality**

**SEPTEMBER 24-25, 2013**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Lawrence H. Cox

**Payment and Registration Due by September 10, 2013**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=092413](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=092413)

#### **Statistical Analysis with Missing Data**

**OCTOBER 3-4, 2013**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Trivellore E. Raghunathan and Roderick Little

**Payment and Registration Due by September 19, 2013**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=100313](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=100313)

#### **Creating and Updating Price Indexes: Theory and Practice**

**NOVEMBER 4-5, 2013**

**The Marriott Inn and Conference Center**, Hyattsville MD 20783

Presented by Dennis J. Fixler and Richard L. Valliant

**Payment and Registration Due by October 21, 2013**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=110413](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=110413)

#### **Introduction to Survey Sampling**

**DECEMBER 11-12, 2013**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Colm O'Muircheartaigh and James M. Lepkowski

**Payment and Registration Due by November 27, 2013**



[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=121013](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=121013)

**Practical Tools for Sampling and Weighting Survey Samples  
JANUARY 22-23, 2014**

**The Marriott Inn and Conference Center**, Hyattsville MD 20783

Presented by Richard L. Valliant and Jill A. Dever

**Payment and Registration Due by January 8, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=012214](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=012214)

**Introduction to Survey Estimation**

**FEBRUARY 3-4, 2014**

**The Marriott Inn and Conference Center**, Hyattsville MD 20783

Presented by David Morganstein and Sunghee Lee

**Payment and Registration Due by January 20, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=020314](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=020314)

**Introduction to the Federal Statistical System**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2014 (1-DAY)**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Brian A. Harris-Kojetin and Hermann Habermann

**Payment and Registration Due by February 6, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=022014](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=022014)

**Writing Questions for Surveys**

**MARCH 10-11, 2014**

**Residence Inn Arlington Pentagon City**, Arlington, VA 22202

Presented by Nora Cate Schaeffer

**Payment and Registration Due by February 24, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=031014](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=031014)

**Designing Mixed-Mode Surveys**

**MARCH 27-28, 2014**

**Sheraton Crystal City Hotel**, Arlington VA 22202

Presented Don A. Dillman, Jolene D. Smyth and Leah Melani Christian

**Payment and Registration Due by March 13, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=032714](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=032714)

**Cognitive Interviewing: A Hands-on Approach**

**APRIL 10-11, 2014**

**L'Enfant Plaza Hotel**, Washington DC 20024

Presented by Gordon B. Willis

**Payment and Registration Due by March 27, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=041014](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=041014)

**Using Paradata in a Responsive Design Framework**

**MAY 5-6, 2014**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by James Wagner and Brady T. West

**Payment and Registration Due by April 21, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=050514](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=050514)

**Methods for Longitudinal Surveys**

**MAY 27-28 2014**

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center**, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Peter Lynn

**Payment and Registration Due by May 13, 2014**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=050514](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=050514)

## CONGRATULATIONS AWARD WINNERS!

### 2013 Julius Shiskin Award Winners John Haltiwanger and Maurine Haver



John C. Haltiwanger, distinguished university professor of economics at the University of Maryland, and Maurine Haver, president and founder of Haver Analytics Inc., have been selected to receive the 2013 Julius Shiskin Memorial Award for Economic Statistics. The award recognizes unusually original and important contributions in the development of economic statistics or in the use of statistics in interpreting the economy.

Both Haltiwanger and Haver are recognized for initiatives to educate users and producers of key federal economic statistics. Haltiwanger is also recognized for expanding access to Census Bureau microdata records and using these records to develop new statistical measures to analyze firm-level employment dynamics and productivity. Haver is also recognized for work with statistical agencies to improve the availability of meta-data and for her leadership of business economists to support adequate funding for economic statistics programs.



Haltiwanger and Haver are the 40th and 41st recipients of the award; they will be honored at events hosted by the Washington Statistical Society, National Association for Business Economics, and Business and Economics Section of the American Statistical Association.

To read about the life and work of both Haltiwanger and Haver, visit *Amstat News* online at <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2013/07/01/shiskin-award/>.

## **Jeanne E. Griffith 2013 Mentoring Award Winner Brian Harris-Kojetin**

### **The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award**

Jeanne E. Griffith worked for more than 25 years in the Federal statistical system. Throughout her career, and especially in her senior management positions at the National Center for Education Statistics and the National Science Foundation, one of Jeanne's highest priorities was to mentor and encourage junior staff to learn, to grow, and to recognize and seize career opportunities as they came along. After her death from breast cancer, the Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award was set up to honor Jeanne. The purpose of the Jeanne E. Griffith Award is to encourage mentoring of junior staff in the Federal statistical system. This is the eleventh year that the Jeanne E. Griffith award has honored mentors across the government. It is also the fifth year of transferring the oversight of the award selection to the ASA Government Statistics Section. This year's awardee is **Brian Harris-Kojetin** from the Office of Management and Budget.

### **The Award Winner: Brian Harris-Kojetin, Office of Management and Budget**

Brian is a senior statistician in the Statistical and Science Policy office at the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President. Brian has received degrees from the University of Denver and the University of Minnesota where he studied psychology and statistics. Prior to working at OMB, Brian spent several years teaching psychology and then as a research psychologist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and as a senior project leader at the Arbitron Company. He is a fellow of the American Statistical Association, Chair of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, and has held leadership roles in several other professional associations.

At the OMB, Brian has the unique ability to see across the Federal statistical community and identify mid-career staff to teach, coach, and mentor about their role in that community. Whether it's a new position, a detail, or a new interagency committee, Brian is always identifying connections between interests and individuals and helping them to successfully connect. As a mentor, Brian seems to instinctively know when to apply pressure and when to offer an encouraging smile.

### **Award ceremony**

Kevin Cecco was the master of ceremony for the award ceremony. He presented several opening remarks, then introduced Katherine Wallman, Chief Statistician at the Office of Management and Budget and the Chair of the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy.

Katherine introduced the other past awardees and important members of the audience, talked about the Griffith Award during its early life, and how it's grown in achievement over the years. Given her close relationship with Brian, Katherine also articulated her excitement about his selection and expressed a few thoughts about Brian's outstanding character and abilities of being a great mentor.

Andy Orlin, Jeanne E. Griffith's spouse, talked about how pleased he was with the direction of this award over the past eleven years and how pleased he was with this year's selection of Brian. Andy

closed by expressing his gratitude to the members of the Jeanne E Griffith selection committee.

Debbie Griffin followed Andy's remarks in the program and presented Brian with the Jeanne E. Griffith plaque and read his citation.

Shelly Martinez, senior statistician at the Office of Management and Budget, and Brian's nominator, spoke on behalf of Brian's award and offered a number of outstanding remarks, among them, "Brian's dedication and outreach to the Federal Statistical System embodies many of the tenets of this award. Although Brian doesn't formally supervise staff, he has no trouble finding folks to mentor. Brian has the innate ability to establish relationships with many individuals in a variety of roles and is able to see how they can benefit from and help to address needs of the Federal statistical community at the same time. Despite the fact that Brian is a statistician, his tools of the trade are not spreadsheets matching names to assignments or algorithms to decide who would be good at what. No, Brian's chief tools are his time and active listening skills – this means both formal and informal interactions at meetings, lunches, and professional conferences. Upon hearing that he had won the award, Brian said that he felt that he didn't do enough mentoring and indicated that the award inspired him to do even more. Brian, it is an honor to have had the chance to nominate you for the Jeanne E. Griffith mentoring award, and my absolute pleasure to be here to celebrate your winning the award with you today."

Brian, in conveying his thanks, talked about how the ceremony was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the legacy of Jeanne Griffith each year and that he was deeply honored to have been selected for this year's award. Brian mentioned that Katherine Wallman often refers to the Federal statistical system as a family. It is the people who serve in our statistical agencies or in statistical private sector firms who embody the culture, principles, ethics, and public service that really makes our statistical system successful. Brian stated that he had the great opportunity to work with wonderful colleagues at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Office of Management and Budget, and at Arbitron, as well as during his details at the Census Bureau, and the Committee on National Statistics. Brian stated that he has grown a great deal from those experiences and from the fabulous colleagues that he worked with throughout his career. Brian stressed to the audience that we take advantage of these same kinds of opportunities, and this award will inspire him to do more to encourage colleagues to grow and pursue opportunities and learn more about our Federal statistical system.

### **Sponsoring the Award**

The GSS continues looking ahead to the long term and expanding our sponsorship. The National Opinion Research Center (NORC), Westat, COPAFS, the American Educational Research Association, and the American Institutes for Research joined the GSS in providing financial support for the award. Our other sponsors for 2013 include the ASA Social Statistics Section, the Washington Statistical Society, and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy. We are seeking corporate sponsors in order to promote this outstanding award for years to come. Please contact Kevin Cecco at [kevin.cecco@irs.gov](mailto:kevin.cecco@irs.gov) if you would like to be a supporter.

*- By Kevin Cecco, Jeanne E. Griffith Selection Committee*

## **CALLING FOR AWARD APPLICANTS!**

### **Lester R. Curtin Award**

#### **Award, Registration and Travel Support to the ASA Conference on Statistical Practice**



The Lester R. Curtin Award was established recently to help promising young health statisticians get the skills and training they need to make significant contributions in their area of study.

The award was created to honor the memory of Lester, or “Randy,” and his long career of working tirelessly to teach and mentor his colleagues at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics

(NCHS).

Lester (Randy) Curtin, December 2009

Randy was a 38-year ASA member, an ASA Fellow, and a recognized expert for his work on childhood growth charts, longitudinal studies, standardized statistical software, vital statistics, and the design of complex sample health surveys. “Randy was overly generous with his time to mentor and teach,” said Lew Berman, who worked with Randy for more than 10 years on the National Children’s Study. “He always had a thoughtful comment to make and was able to see things that others could not.”

Nat Schenker, a statistical colleague who co-authored with Randy, said “Randy was a smart and fun guy, with whom I always enjoyed discussing applied statistical problems. He was terrific at explaining complex issues in understandable ways, which I’m sure was one reason he was such an effective mentor and teacher.” Schenker went on to say that Randy had great intuition, experience, and wisdom with regard to statistical practice. “So this new award involving the conference on statistical practice is a wonderful tribute to his memory.”

In the spirit of Randy’s service, the award is funded through an endowment established by his wife, Sally. Although she never worked directly with Randy, she met him in 1989 when they both worked at the NCHS. She had a statistical problem she couldn’t solve and someone

recommended she ask Randy. “They told me he had a beautiful, mathematical mind,” she said. “So, I met Randy doing what he did best—helping people with statistical problems.”

The award will provide registration and travel support to the ASA Conference on Statistical Practice, which takes place every February. To be eligible for the \$1,000 award, applicants must work in the field of health statistics (broadly defined as either applied, including public health policy, or clinical work) or in a graduate program to prepare for such work. Preference will be given to those who have been working in the field for five or fewer years, or who are still in graduate school.

### To Apply for the Award

The following items are required to apply for the award:

- Two letters of recommendation
- Curriculum vitae
- Statement of no more than 500 words explaining the applicant’s career goals, what they hope to learn by attending the conference, and how they plan to contribute to real-world applications of statistics in their field.

Past chairs from the Health Policy Statistics, Survey Research Methods, Biopharmaceutical, Teaching Statistics in the Health Sciences, Mental Health Statistics, Statistics in Epidemiology, and Biometrics sections will select the award winner.

The application deadline is **October 15, 2013**. Submit all items to Lynn Palmer, ASA director of programs, at [palmer@amstat.org](mailto:palmer@amstat.org).

The winner will be announced by December 1.

## **BE INFORMED AND GET INVOLVED!**

### **Latest News on International Year of Statistics**

The District of Columbia's Office of Planning/State Data Center is promoting the International Year of Statistics through several activities:

- The office has given a presentation titled "Population Data Interpretation and Access" to a group of students in Dr. Kimberly Crews Population Dynamics class at the University of the District of Columbia. Statistics2013 also was discussed during the session.
- It has published on its agency blog site an article titled "Statistics Aren't Lies... Aren't They?" You can read the blog [here](#).
- It is preparing a series of infographics. The first—DC's Black Population—is [here](#).

All other news are available in the latest International Year of Statistics newsletter, <http://www.statistics2013.org/files/2013/06/June-3-2013.pdf>. Past newsletters can be reviewed at <http://www.statistics2013.org/participant-newsletter-archive/>.

~ Donsig Jang  
WSS Liaison for the International Year of Statistics



## FLYING HIGH AT THE HOWARD COUNTY STEM FESTIVAL

Howard County held their first [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math](#) (STEM) Festival at the Howard County Community College, half way between Washington, DC, and Baltimore, MD. What motivated four members of the Washington Statistical Society (WSS) to participate on this June 9, Sunday afternoon? John Scott (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) and John Tillinghast (U.S. Census Bureau), Mark Otto (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), and Sylvia Tan (Research Triangle Institute) have helped with past WSS Quantitative Literacy projects. They all enjoyed sharing their interests in science and math and especially liked engaging young people.

Even though they were relegated to the third floor, they used their location to their advantage. Rebecca Nichols (ASA Education Director) suggested a simple helicopter experiment. A hands-on demonstration that showed what statisticians do was more effective than complicated, but dizzying, displays. The kids flew helicopters of different propeller lengths and recorded which stayed aloft the longest. The budding statisticians were much more excited to launch the whirly papers down the three flights of the atrium, and they attracted more attention down on the main floor. While Sylvia and John T. took flight times on their cell phone stop watches and collected the copters, John S. downloaded R onto a college computer in the lobby, made histograms, and did a two-sample t-test<sup>1</sup>. Kids that came early even came back to see how the experiment turned out.

Mark missed most of the fun, giving two career talks on the making the often reported on seasonally-adjusted economic numbers at the Census Bureau, and how to survey ducks and bald eagles at the Fish and Wildlife Service. He pointed out that statisticians ranked 20<sup>th</sup> out of 200 in [career satisfaction for 2013](#), but they needed statisticians to do the survey in the first place. After a tiring day, the crew piled in together for the long drive back to Washington—a fun, satisfying day.

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<sup>1</sup> When working with students, we face a dilemma of needing to work with applications that they use, like [GapMinder](#), [Core Math Tools](#), [StatCrunch](#), [Geometer's SketchPad](#), [McGraw-Hill's Fathom Dynamic Data](#), and even [MS Excel](#) when volunteers are stretched just learning the software we need for our jobs, SAS, SPSS, SPlus, R. Somethings like Jmp and RStudio may get close to doing both.

## OF INTEREST TO THE WSS COMMUNITY

- [FY14 Budget Request for NIH, NSF, and Statistical Agencies](#), *Amstat News*, June 2013.
- [Congress Finalizes FY13 Budgets](#), *Amstat News*, June 2013 (with graphs of ICSP statistical agency budgets over last 10 years).
- [Results on Data Quality for Newly Voluntary Canadian Long-Form Census Coming In](#), 5/16/13 ASA Community blog entry.
- [New Congress goes after political science research funding, the American Community Survey, other surveys, survey incentives and the peer-reviewed, merit-based grant-funding process](#); 4/13 ASA Community blog entry.
- [FY14 Statistical Agency Budget Developments](#), 6/6/13 ASA Community blog entry.
- ASA initiates or signs onto letters of support for
  - John H. Thompson nomination: [5/30/13](#).
  - BEA: [5/31/13](#).
  - EIA: [5/31/13](#).
  - Census: [Congress 4/11/13](#).
  - NCHS: [NCHS House 4/19/13](#).
- ERS & NASS: [Senate 5/13/13](#); [House 5/13/13](#).

## **United Nations' 2013 National Competitive Examinations in Statistics**

Dear Colleague,

I would like to inform you that the United Nations has recently announced the 2013 National Competitive Examinations in Statistics. As you may know, it is through this examination process that the UN System, including our office, recruits young professional statisticians. I am pleased to let you know that qualified candidates from your country, 32 years or younger, are eligible to participate in the examinations.

We would like to ask your kind assistance in ensuring that the information about these examinations reaches potential young applicants, for instance through your website, newsletters or bulletin boards. Also, it would be very helpful if you could forward this information to national associations involved in statistics and/or relevant institutions of higher education, offering degrees with substantial statistical courses. The **deadline for applications is 2 August 2013.**

Detailed information about the examinations and the application and employment conditions can be found at <http://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=NCE>

Thank you very much for your support.

~Stefan Schweinfest  
Acting Director  
UN Statistics Division  
Tel. 1.212.963-4849

## Washington Statistical Society's Spotlight on Members Program

The WSS Board of Directors has established a program to highlight members who have made or are making notable contributions to the work of their organization or their professional field of expertise. We know that WSS members are doing interesting work in the fields of statistics, survey methodology, and the social sciences. Through this program, we hope to spotlight the accomplishments of our fellow WSS members.

This is our first request for nominations, to be featured in an upcoming issue of WSS News. We are interested in featuring members at all levels of the employment spectrum including recent graduates, mid-career employees, and those seasoned veterans.

Please feel free to nominate more than one person or a team working together. You may also nominate yourself as well. The nominees must be members of the WSS and not currently affiliated with the Board.

Please provide us with the following information about your nominee or nominees.

1. *Your* name, email address, and telephone number
2. Name or names of nominee(s)
3. Organizational affiliation
4. Job title
5. Their contact information including email address and telephone number
6. A brief narrative describing the reasons for your nomination
7. A photo of the nominee, although not required, would be greatly appreciated

Please send this information to Mel Kollander, member of the WSS Board. His email address is [mellk@erols.com](mailto:mellk@erols.com). If you have any questions please contact Mel.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## Join the WSS Meetup

The Washington Statistical Society has begun to use Meetup to help spread the word about WSS events. Members are invited to join at <http://meetup.com/WashStat/> for benefits such as:

- Notices and reminders of WSS events
- Ability to indicate whether you will attend
- Opportunity to offer suggestions and other feedback.

Users can specify their preferences for email and other features.

## **WSS Webmaster Needed**

The Washington Statistical Society asks your help locating a volunteer to take on the job of webmaster.

Webmaster has long been a key role at WSS. The WSS website (<http://washstat.org/>) is updated much more frequently than this newsletter—whenever news of interest to our members becomes available. The webmaster also developed, maintains, and runs the scripts that implement our annual and special elections.

The WSS webmaster should have knowledge of current web technologies and pay careful attention to detail. Ideally, he or she will be familiar with WordPress, Drupal, Joomla, or other content management systems so he or she can help decentralize website maintenance. The webmaster should also know php so she or he can implement, maintain, and improve the scripts we use for elections and other special purposes.

Please ask within your organizations and elsewhere for someone to take on these important tasks. We also are looking for someone to help maintain and coordinate our various calendar listings. Contact Phil Kalina, Communications Officer, for more information.

Thank you for helping WSS better serve our members.

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

### **Applied Statistics Manager—Market Research**

#### **Job Description**

Fannie Mae's Economic and Strategic Research unit is currently searching for a well qualified Applied Statistics Manager who will generally focus on, but not limited to, strategic market research topics. Responsibilities are divided into three areas:

- Lead and execute in-depth analytical projects based on various data sources, including primary and secondary data, using advanced statistical analysis techniques
- Work with internal and external clients to deliver actionable findings to address business needs
- Communicate analysis results and their implications in a manner that will be easily understood by non-technical professionals and the media

#### **Job Qualifications**

The ideally qualified candidate would possess the following skills and abilities:

##### Education & Experience

Well qualified candidates are likely to have a MS (PhD preferred) in a relevant quantitative field (e.g., statistics, mathematics, economics, etc.) and at least several years of applied experience in the advanced analytics, market research, or marketing science industry or a related field where they have consistently delivered actionable and practical results. Experience in financial services and consumer finance are a plus.

##### Project Management Skills

The successful candidate must be able to either independently or working with clients and external vendors:

- Translate clients' business objectives and decision support needs into effectively targeted analytical designs
- Implement advanced analyses and help determine the business implications to deliver actionable results
- Apply strong written communications capabilities, including effectively translating statistical analysis results into understandable and clear storylines so less technical

professionals, and the media when appropriate, can easily understand findings and their implications and apply to their business and policy needs

- Coordinate efforts on a regular basis with the Market Research Manager to deliver effective market research design efforts and actionable results

### Managerial Skills

The successful candidate must have the ability to:

- “Multitask” and work in a very fluid and typically rapid-paced workflow situation, usually “juggling” demands from multiple projects at the same time
- Engage professionally and competently with clients
- Manage multiple vendor relationships
- On occasion, address overall research project needs beyond statistical issues

### Technical Skills

Strong skills and experience with basic and advanced data analysis and statistical procedures typically used in marketing research and market science, such as:

- Market research methodology (online, phone, and mail survey techniques)
- Frequency distributions & descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency, cross-tabulation, significance testing, analysis of variance, correlations)
- Multivariate advanced statistics (e.g., various types of regression analyses, MANOVA, factor analysis, cluster analysis, segmentation, conjoint design & analysis, etc.)
- Econometrics (e.g., index construction, predictive modeling, risk assessment)
- Data skills such as manipulating, synthesizing and analyzing large complex primary and secondary (e.g. Census) data sets and appending primary data with secondary data to enrich insights
- Expertise and experience with relevant software applications, including:
  - Microsoft Office applications: Excel (extreme proficiency required), Word, and PowerPoint
  - SPSS/SAS: Very strong SPSS/SAS skills with ability to write and execute syntax
  - Other relevant applications a plus (e.g., Stata, MatLab, etc.)

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## **FROM THE WSS NEWS EDITOR**

Items for publication in the **September, 2013** issue of WSS NEWS will be accepted thru the **15<sup>th</sup>** of the **preceding month**.

Email items to [wss.editor@gmail.com](mailto:wss.editor@gmail.com).

The authors are responsible for verifying the contents of their submissions. Submissions requiring extensive revisions on length and/or contents will be returned.

Please submit all materials as an attachment in **MS WORD** or **plain text**. Submissions in any other format (e.g., in an email) will be returned.

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