



# WSS NEWS

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# WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

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## **WSS MEMBER ELECTED AAAS FELLOW**

WSS member Michael P. Cohen has been elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) by their Council. Mike is a Principal Statistician at the American Institutes for Research in Georgetown.

The honor of being elected an AAAS Fellow began in 1874 for members whose “efforts on behalf of the advancement of science or its applications are scientifically or socially distinguished.” The AAAS citation for Mike reads: “For significant statistical research, especially methods for large-scale statistical surveys, and for fostering inter-disciplinary communication through many years of generous service to professional societies.”

Mike was WSS president in 2007-8 and currently is WSS program chair for human rights statistics.

## SEMINARS

**Title:** **Strategies for Integration and Innovation in Federal Economic Statistics**

**Date/Time:** **January 20, 2016**

**12:30 – 1:30 pm**

Julius Shiskin Memorial Award for Economic Statistics Seminar

**Speaker:** Brent R. Moulton, Bureau of Economic Analysis

**Chair:** Robert P. Parker, Consultant

**Location:** Bureau of Economic Analysis  
1441 “L” Street, NW, Washington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Center

To be placed on the attendance list, please email [Sarah.Garrick@bea.gov](mailto:Sarah.Garrick@bea.gov) by noon the day before the seminar, or call 202-606-5641. Bring a photo ID and arrive a few minutes early to allow time for passing through security. The Visitor’s Center is located directly to the right as you enter through the front doors. The nearest Metro stations are McPherson Square (Orange/Blue/Silver) and Farragut North (Red Line).

**Abstract:** How can federal statistical agencies develop and successfully implement a strategy for innovation? The speaker presents and illustrates principles for innovation in federal economic statistics with a focus on developing integrated statistics—statistics that use consistent concepts, definitions, and classifications, thereby allowing data users to clearly interpret and analyze them within a coherent system of economic statistics. The principles are illustrated with detailed examples of both successful and unsuccessful innovations drawn from work on integration of macroeconomic statistics, on identification and removal of biases in the consumer price index, and on updating and revising international guidelines. The talk concludes with a discussion of emerging issues and strategies for anticipating and addressing the changing needs of data users.

**PLEASE FORWARD THIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO OTHERS WHO MIGHT  
BE INTERESTED IN THE TOPIC**

**Title:** **An Overview of the Recently Updated ASA Undergraduate Curriculum Guidelines for Statistics**

**Date/Time:** **January 20, 2016**

**4:00–5:30 pm**

Informal reception to follow at approximately 5:45 p.m. at East Street Café on the mezzanine level of Union Station.

**Speaker:** Steve Cohen, Senior Fellow, NORC at the University of Chicago

**Chair:** Nathaniel Schenker, Deputy Director, National Center for Health Statistics and Former President, ASA

**Sponsors:** WSS Statistics Education Committee and Gonzaga College High School

**Location:** Gonzaga College High School – 191 Street, NW Washington, DC 20001 – Ruesch Hall, Room 307. Please call (202) 336-7100 if you have trouble finding the building.

By Metro: Take the Red Line to Union Station. From Union Station, walk north along North Capitol Street for about 4-5 blocks until you reach St Aloysius Church (just after the football field). Go through the pedestrian entrance of the gate to the right of the church. To your right are the two academic buildings, Ruesch and Cantwell Halls. Enter through the center entrance of those buildings and proceed up the stairs to Room 307.

By Car: Free parking is available in the school parking garage, which is accessible after 3 p.m. Information about the parking garage can be found at <http://www.gonzaga.org/parking>. Coming out of the garage, the building in front of you is Dooley Hall. To the right of Dooley Hall is a pass-through to the other part of the campus. Go down those stairs, through the pass-through and then up the stairs after that. As you come up the stairs you will see the two main academic buildings, Ruesch and Cantwell Halls. Enter through the center entrance of those buildings and proceed up the stairs to Room 307.

**RSVP:** To be placed on the seminar attendance list, please email Carol Joyce Blumberg at [cblumberg@gmail.com](mailto:cblumberg@gmail.com) by **January 18, 2016**.

**Abstract:** The American Statistical Association (ASA) recognizes the importance of undergraduate programs in statistics. In 2000 ASA endorsed undergraduate curriculum guidelines for statistics. In 2013 ASA formed an undergraduate curriculum workgroup to revise if necessary the 2000 guidelines as much has changed over the intervening 12 years since they were last reviewed. While many aspects of our 2014 recommendations remain the same as the previous guidelines, much has changed and needs to be made more specific and detailed. The proposed new guidelines reflect the increased importance of data-related skills in practice, with more emphasis on teamwork, communications, and related experiences (e.g., internships, REUs, and capstones). In this talk, I provide the context of how the workgroup attempted to gain community input on what should be included, discuss the details of the new curriculum guidelines as they reflect changes already implemented in many current curricula, and discuss the supporting material that supplements the guidelines with additional detail that is on the ASA website.

**POC email:** Carol Joyce Blumberg, [cblumberg@gmail.com](mailto:cblumberg@gmail.com)

**Remote Access:** If you want to attend the seminar remotely, using video and/or audio, contact [cblumberg@gmail.com](mailto:cblumberg@gmail.com) by **January 18, 2016**. Instructions will be provided to you around **January 18**.

**Title:** **Benefit; and Challenge; in Using Paradata**

**Date/Time:** **January 26, 2016**  
**12:30– 3:30 pm**

**Moderator:** Mike Fleming

**Sponsor:** WSS Methodology Section

**Location:** Offices of Mathematica-MPR  
1100 1st Street NE, 12th Floor, Washington DC 20002.

Once in the building, inform the receptionist at the first floor lobby that you are visiting Mathematica for a WSS seminar. Then, take the elevators to the 12th floor and tell the Mathematica receptionist that you are attending the WSS seminar. Please call Mathematica's main office number (202 484-9220), if you have trouble finding the building.

**By Metro:** Take the Red Line to either the NoMa-Gallaudet U (used to be called New York Ave) Station or Union Station. From the NoMa-Gallaudet U Station, follow signs to exit at M Street. Then walk 1 block west on M street and 2 blocks south on 1st Street NE (the building will be on your right). From Union Station, walk north along 1st Street NE for about 4-5 blocks until you reach L Street (the building will be on your left after crossing L street).

**By Car:** Pay parking is available in the building parking garage, which is located 1 block east of North Capitol on L Street NE.

**Guest List:** To be placed on the attendance list (in-person or webex), please RSVP to Alyssa Maccarone at [AMaccarone@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:AMaccarone@mathematica-mpr.com) or (202) 250-3570 at least 2 days in advance of the conference. Provide your name, affiliation, and contact information (e-mail is preferred). Once on the attendance list with webex preference, you will be provided with information about webinar.

**Lunch option:** Attendees may arrive early to have lunch nearby. Local lunch options may be found through:

[http://www.nomabid.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/FINAL\\_NeighborhoodGuide.pdf](http://www.nomabid.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/FINAL_NeighborhoodGuide.pdf)

You may also bring your own lunches to the seminar.

*Following the seminar, snacks and refreshments will be served, encouraging the attendees to continue questions and discussions on the talks.*

### **Schedule:**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Point of Contact</b>
12:30	Mike Fleming		charles.fleming@bhox.com
12:40	Brady West	University of Michigan	bwest@umich.edu
1:05	Emilia Peytcheva	RTI International	epeytcheva@rti.org
1:30	Stephanie Coffey	US Census Bureau	Stephanie.Coffey@census.gov
1:55	Intermission		
2:10	Jason Markesich Shawn Marsh	Mathematica Policy Research	JMarkesich@mathematica-mpr.com
2:35	James Wagner	University of Michigan	jameswag@umich.edu
3:00	Floor Discussion		

**Abstracts:****Interviewer Observations in the National Survey of Family Growth: Lessons Learned and Unanswered Questions**

In this presentation, I will discuss several studies of the quality and utility of interviewer observations in the National Survey of Family Growth, ongoing research related to improving their quality, and future research directions for these types of observations. Existing research suggests that these observations can be useful for responsive design and nonresponse adjustment purposes, and that in some cases the observations are more effective than linked commercial data. However, there is a great deal of room for improvement in terms of the collection and analysis of these observations, and the presentation will touch on necessary future research in this area.

~ Brady West

**Modelling Paradata for Interviewer Monitoring**

Interviewer's performance is essential to data quality. Paradata play a critical role in monitoring and improving interviewer performance, but are not as useful as they could be, in their raw form. For example, even in a centralized CATI survey, cases are not randomly assigned to interviewers; some interviewers only work on evenings, others may not be permitted to call previous refusals, etc. There are also multiple aspects of interviewer performance, ranging from success rate in gaining participation to administering the questions as intended.

We describe a system for interviewer performance monitoring that provides an automated and standardized means to monitor and improve interviewer performance in a call-center environment. Two types of multivariate models are of interest. First are models for predicted interviewer response rate, as a function of type of sample called in a shift, language spoken by the sample member, number and types of cases attempted, etc. These models were started on a study in early 2010 and are now used on multiple surveys. Versions of these models have also been implemented to predict refusal conversion rate, as a function of call history paradata.

In addition, we are currently developing models to incorporate coded interviewer behavior from monitored recorded interviews and interactions. These models aim to provide interviewer-level measures of interviewer adherence to the survey protocol and to allow prompt feedback to interviewers before such behavior can impact the measurement properties of the data.

~ Emilia Peytcheva



### **Using System Paradata to Target and Evaluate Data Collection Operations**

Paradata is being used increasingly for both understanding data collection operations as well as making changes to data collection. Paradata can be either interviewer-generated or system-generated, depending on the data collection operation and the system being used. This talk will discuss three examples of the use of paradata in the National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG). The NSCG is a 6-month long sequential multimode survey, cycling through web self-response, paper self-response, and finally, computer-assisted telephone interviewing for nonresponse followup. Therefore, the vast majority of our paradata is system-generated paradata.

In this talk, I will present three illustrations of how paradata is being used in the NSCG. First, I will discuss an ad-hoc intervention implemented during the 2013 NSCG to respond to an unexpected performance issue in the web instrument. Next, I will present a simple illustration of how we are evaluating CATI as a driver of paper or web response. Finally, I will demonstrate how we are using intelligent mail barcoding (IMB) data to allocate resources to cases more efficiently.

~ Stephanie Coffey

### **Best Practices for Implementing a Paradata Warehouse**

Paradata are a powerful tool for increasing the effectiveness of data collection. To ensure high quality survey data and low-cost data collection, Mathematica developed the Paradata Warehouse, a centralized, standardized repository that will contain paradata for all of our projects. New project data are added to the warehouse, and are accessible, on a daily basis. Survey managers can conduct cross-project and/or cross-instrument analysis of paradata to inform design and budgeting decisions. Because the warehouse tracks hundreds of variables across multiple projects, we have incorporated business intelligence tools and data visualization software to help users understand the story their data is telling. As part of our adaptive design initiative, our survey managers can analyze these paradata and tailor data collection strategies to respond quickly to conditions “in the field” to maximize efficiency and improve quality.

This presentation discusses some best practices for implementing and deploying a paradata warehouse that collects and organizes information in a manner that is easily accessible and meaningful to managers. We begin by discussing the steps we have taken to ensure the accuracy of the data in the warehouse through the standardization of status and charge codes, metadata management, and testing and reconciliation processes. Next, we present some data visualization techniques that help engage users by providing them with answers quickly, and in an easy-to-understand format. We conclude by offering some tips on how to develop a strategy that will help facilitate user adoption of a paradata warehouse.

~ Jason Markesich and Shawn Marsh

### **Estimating Response Propensity Models During Data Collection: Challenges and New Approaches**

Response propensity models have been used to create inputs to adaptive survey designs. These inputs may be needed during data collection as triggers for design decisions. However, predictions from response propensity models can be biased when fit on a daily basis during data collection using the incoming data. One solution to this problem might be to fix the estimated coefficients from these models using estimates from previous data collections. This approach has two disadvantages. First, a suitably matched data collection must exist. Second, it is not sensitive to temporal changes that may change estimated coefficients. Bayesian logistic regression models, with informative priors, may address these weaknesses. This presentation examines some of the challenges of working with incoming streams of paradata and suggest potential solutions.

~ James Wagner

**PLEASE FORWARD THIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO  
OTHERS WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED**

**Title:** **Panel on Careers in Statistics**

**Date/Time:** **February 17, 2016**  
**3:30 – 6:45 pm (Snow Date of Wednesday, February 24)**

3:30-4:15-Arrivals and informal socializing

4:15-5:40-Formal panel

5:40-6:30-Pizza party (The Washington Statistical Society (WSS) will supply the pizza. Attendees are asked to bring their own non-alcoholic beverages.)

**Speakers:** Bachelor's Level Employee: Anthony Roring, Ernst & Young  
Master's Level Employee: Kathleen M. Kephart, U.S. Census Bureau  
Ph.D. Level Employee: Sherry T. Liu, Food & Drug Administration  
Employer: Mary Batchner, retired (formerly of Internal Revenue Service and Ernst & Young)

(All employees are within a few years of finishing their degrees)

**Moderator:** Scott Marchese, George Mason University and WSS Student Representative

**Sponsors:** WSS Statistics Education Committee, Pew Research Center and the ASA Student Chapters of Morgan State University, George Washington University and George Mason University.

**Location:** Pew Research Center  
1615 L Street NW, Suite 800  
Washington DC 20036.

Please call (202) 419-4300 if you have trouble finding the building.

By Metro: The nearest Metrorail station is Farragut North on the Red Line, which is two blocks away. Farragut West station on the Blue, Orange and Silver Lines is only a slightly longer walk.

By Car: The nearest parking is in the parking garage on L Street next to the building. Pew Research Center does not provide any parking validation.

**RSVP:** To be placed on the attendance list, please email Carol Joyce Blumberg at [cblumberg@gmail.com](mailto:cblumberg@gmail.com) by February 14, 2016. A maximum of 180 reservations will be allowed due to space limitations. Note: High school students must be accompanied by a teacher or parent/guardian. A teacher or parent/guardian may accompany multiple students. Please include both students' and chaperones' names in your RSVP.

**Check-in:** Upon entering in the building, all attendees must check-in with security. They will ask to see a photo ID, will check off names on the RSVP list, and direct you to the elevators. Once you reach to 8<sup>th</sup> floor, a receptionist will buzz you into Suite 800.

**Abstract:** The event will begin with 45 minutes of informal networking and the opportunity for participants to collect informational handouts on careers in statistics from the American Statistical Association, area universities and various government agencies, non-profit organizations and other employers in the greater DC area and to talk informally with employers. Please note that this is not a job fair. Then, the formal part of the program will take place. For approximately one hour the moderator will ask questions of the panelists about topics such as their background (degrees, internships, other jobs, etc.), what they do in their present job, what are the best things and worst things about their jobs, what are the most important courses to take in college—both in mathematics/statistics and outside of mathematics/statistics, what other skills are important for employees to have, and what else are employers looking for. This will be followed by approximately 25 minutes of questions from the audience.

**POC email:** Carol Joyce Blumberg, [cblumberg@gmail.com](mailto:cblumberg@gmail.com)

**Remote Access:** Only audio access will be provided for this event. Please contact [cblumberg@gmail.com](mailto:cblumberg@gmail.com) by February 14, 2015 if you want audio access. Instructions will be provided to you around February 14.

**A special note to universities or employers: If you wish to provide handouts (or similar), please bring the material; with you the afternoon of the event. Those who cannot attend the event may drop off or mail material; ahead of time to the following address: John Wade—Careers in Statistics, Pew Research Center, 1615 L Street NW, Suite 800, Washington DC 20036-5622. Please bring or send no more than 180 copies of any materials.**

**Ross-Royall Symposium on Population Inference at  
Johns Hopkins University**

**February 26, 2016**

The Department of Biostatistics at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health is pleased to announce the Inaugural Ross-Royall Symposium focused on population inference, to be held on Friday February 26, 2016 in Baltimore, MD. This year's symposium, "From Individuals to Populations" will highlight recent advances in statistical methods for making population inferences in public health. It will honor the contributions made in this area by Alan Ross and Richard Royall, both former faculty in the JHSPH Department of Biostatistics. There will be a particular focus on innovative methods that allow for population inferences despite a lack of formally representative data sources, or for enhancing inferences by combining multiple data sources.

The symposium on February 26 will include three sessions with leading researchers in the field as well as a concluding panel discussion and an evening reception. The session topics include "Population inferences from observational studies", "Transporting treatment effects using randomized trials and observational studies," and "Inference from internet samples." We have lined up an impressive set of speakers and experts from across the country; see the whole listing below.

Full details, including registration information can be found at this site: <http://goo.gl/Nd9qjm>

We hope many of you can join us for this exciting event, and help us continue the wonderful legacy of Alan Ross and Richard Royall.

Sincerely,

The Ross-Royall Symposium Organizing Committee  
Michael Rosenblum and Elizabeth Stuart, co-Chairs  
Karen Bandeen-Roche, Jay Herson, Tom Louis, and Chuck Rohde

**Speaker list:**

- William R. Bell, Research and Methodology Directorate, US Census Bureau
- Andy Gelman, Professor, Department of Statistics and Department of Political Science, Columbia University
- Tim Gregoire, J.P. Weyerhaeuser Professor of Forest Management, Yale University
- Erin Hartman, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and Statistics, University of California at Los Angeles
- Eloise Kaizar, Associate Professor, Department of Statistics, Ohio State University
- Jae Kwang Kim, Professor, Department of Statistics and Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (CSSM), Iowa State University
- Frauke Kreuter, Professor, Joint Program in Survey Methodology, Maryland Population Research Center, University of Maryland
- Jon Krosnick, Professor of Communication, Political Science, and Psychology, Stanford University
- Rod Little, Richard D. Remington Distinguished University Professor, Department of Biostatistics, University of Michigan
- Peter Miller, US Bureau of the Census
- Doug Rivers, Professor of Political Science, Stanford University, and Chief Scientist, YouGov
- Sebastian Schneeweiss, Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Harvard Medical School and Division of Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacoeconomics, Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Elizabeth Stuart, Professor, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Rick Valliant, Research Professor, Universities of Michigan and Maryland: Inferential in Finite Population from Nonprobability Samples
- Ravi Varadhan, Associate Professor, Division of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology, Department of Medicine Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions

# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## ICES-V Call for Software Demonstrations

As the fifth in the series of international conferences on establishment surveys, ICES-V is designed to look forward at key issues and methods pertaining to establishment surveys (<http://www.ices-v.ch>). We invite you to submit proposals for demonstrations of software used in establishment surveys and statistics. Demonstrations should target live processing of data with possible customizations for the interest of specific audiences, rather than inflexible slide shows or presentations. Proposed software packages should already be in use for one or more establishment surveys and should be designed to automate establishment survey or statistical processes, including but not limited to:

- Producing statistics in developing countries
- Creating and updating registers
- Questionnaire development
- Selection of samples and sample weighting
- Data collection methodology
- Survey management: adaptive and responsive designs, using paradata and metadata
- Measuring and mitigating nonresponse bias
- Automated data coding and variable transformations
- Estimation & variance estimation (e.g. small area) for standard and complex survey designs
- Calibration to administrative data or other benchmarks
- Data linkage, matching and data unduplication and using big data with surveys
- Descriptive and complex statistical analyses
- Statistical methods of developing consistent data sets (editing, imputation, and outlier treatment)
- Data mining, reduction, blocking or segmentation, harmonization and use of decision trees
- Systems and architecture for statistical production
- Data governance
- Advances in disclosure protection

### **Schedule and Equipment**

The demonstrations will take place in a separate room during the regular conference sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday of the conference. They will be split into different groups, each with a dedicated half-day. Participants will be provided with large monitors, tables, and chairs. The participants will provide their own computers and demonstration software, and will be able to arrange for Internet connections.

### **Proposal Submission**

**Submission of software demonstration proposals begins 01 June 2015 and will close on 12 December 2015.** Proposal can be submitted at and inquiries can be directed to: ices-v.demos@bfs.admin.ch. Proposals should include a description of the software package, potential applications to other survey organizations, and special equipment required for the demonstration. Participants are required to register for the conference and pay the registration fee.

The ICES-V program committee will review the proposals and notify all applicants by **30 December 2015** whether their proposal has been accepted, with conference registration payment due by **31 January 2016**.





# ANNUAL POSTER COMPETITION FOR K-12 STUDENTS



Entries must be postmarked by the deadline date: **April 1, 2016.**

## Call for Entries

The **American Statistical Association** (ASA) has an annual poster competition for students in Grades K-12, with separate winners in Grades K-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12. The aim is to increase statistical awareness and understanding via a statistical poster containing two or more related graphics that summarize a set of data, look at the data from different points of view, and answer specific questions about the data in a coherent manner.

The **Washington Statistical Society** (WSS), a chapter of the American Statistical Association (ASA), is awarding prizes for the competition in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Winners of this local competition will then be entered into the national competition.

## Objectives

Enhance students' understanding of:

- ▶ the use of statistics in the real world
- ▶ how statistics are used to analyze information
- ▶ the importance of graphical displays
- ▶ how to prepare a coherent poster presentation

## Entry Rules & Guidelines

This local competition follows the rules and evaluation process for the national competition at:

<http://www.amstat.org/education/posterprojects/index.cfm>

The deadline for submission of entries is **April 1** of each year. Note: Although the forms and posters are sent to the ASA national office, they will be judged separately from the posters from other regions.

Further questions can be directed to Barnali Das at (301) 279-4593 or [barnalidas@westat.com](mailto:barnalidas@westat.com).

## Eligibility

- ▶ Grades K-12
- ▶ Residence in the Washington DC metropolitan area

## Evaluation

- ▶ **Overall impact** – Eye-catching appeal, visual attractiveness, and ability to draw the viewer to investigate the individual graphs
- ▶ **Clarity** – Demonstration of important relationships and patterns in a clear and coherent manner
- ▶ **Appropriateness** – Appropriate graphics for the data
- ▶ **Creativity!**

## Prizes & Awards

*WSS Poster Competition winners will be awarded as follows:*

### INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES

1st Prize:	\$100
2nd Prize & 3rd Prize:	\$50

### TEAM ENTRIES

1st Prize:	\$50 for each team member, up to a maximum of \$200.
2nd Prize & 3rd Prize:	\$25 for each team member, up to a maximum of \$100

Winners and their teachers/academic supervisors will also be invited to attend the annual WSS awards dinner. For team entries, a maximum of four students per entry will be provided with free meals, although additional students may attend the dinner at their own cost.

## Prizes & Awards cont'd.

Winners will also have their submissions sent to the national ASA poster competition.

National winners will receive additional prizes as described at:

<http://www.amstat.org/education/posterprojects/prizes.cfm>

## Useful Resources about What Makes a Successful Poster

- ▶ **Having Success with the Statistical Poster**
- ▶ **Webinar at:**  
<http://www.amstat.org/education/posterprojects/PosterCompetitionWebinar12-3-07.wmv>
- ▶ **Comments from judges of the 2013 competition at:**

[http://www.amstat.org/education/posterprojects/2013Posters\\_Observations.pdf](http://www.amstat.org/education/posterprojects/2013Posters_Observations.pdf)

- ▶ **Winning posters from recent competitions at:**  
<http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2015/08/01/2015-poster-project-competition/>

The WSS and ASA also have competitions for written papers/projects with significant statistical content/analyses. Details for those competitions are at:

- ▶ **WSS Curtis Jacobs Memorial Prize:**  
[http://washstat.org/awards/jacobs\\_award\\_2016.pdf](http://washstat.org/awards/jacobs_award_2016.pdf)

- ▶ **ASA:**  
<http://www.amstat.org/education/posterprojects/index.cfm>



# **WSS MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT!**

# Washington Statistical Society

## Member Spotlight

*Introducing your fellow members and showcasing the diversity of the WSS membership*



### Meet WSS Volunteer Dhuly Chowdhury...

#### 1. Where do you work and what do you do?

I am a research statistician in the Biostatistics and Epidemiology Division at RTI International. Since joining RTI in 2002, I have worked on several multi-center research studies and large-scale surveys. My current projects are focused on blood transfusion practice, neonatal research, underage smoking, residential energy consumption, and direct to consumer prescription drug advertisement.

#### 2. What attracted you to your current position?

RTI is a research organization that addresses pressing health, social, educational and environmental needs around the globe by providing clients with the evidence-based knowledge to make sound scientific and policy decisions. We are known for high-quality, impactful, multidisciplinary research and services fostered in an exemplary work environment. The mission of RTI is "To improve the human condition by turning knowledge into practice." It was this mission and the type and quality of the work performed that attracted me to RTI and this position. Also, RTI's statistics research group, which was created by Gertrude Cox includes over one hundred vibrant statisticians who inspire fellow statisticians to grow their individual talent and team performance.

#### 3. Finish this sentence: "I joined WSS to..."

...meet other WSS members and be involved with WSS activities as a service to the profession.

#### 4. What was your first job?

My first paid job was reciting a poem at a local radio station at age 4 for which I got 20 taka (\$0.50 in US money). I was so thrilled that I had a "job" and earned money before either of my elder siblings. During my college years at University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, I worked as a private tutor for math and statistics. My job at RTI is my first job as a statistician.

#### 5. If you could give your 18-year-old self one piece of advice, what would it be?

Don't worry so much. Imposter syndrome is common among young women. Learn how to combat those feelings.

#### 6. What is the last book you read?

Crucial Conversations, by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler. Recently, I was invited to a seminar by VitalSmart and received this book. It is a great book for consulting statisticians who collaborate with subject matter experts in different areas.

#### 7. What skills are most important for the next generation of statistics professionals?

Sound statistical and programming skills will continue to be necessary for the next generation of statisticians, but they are not sufficient. In order to effectively work and communicate with researchers and subject matter experts in a wide variety of fields, we need to learn and speak their technical language and understand their research objectives.

#### 8. What advice would you give to someone entering the statistics profession?

Find role models, mentors, and sponsors who believe in you and seek honest feedback and guidance. Learn objective knowledge of yourself and try to do challenging work that you find fulfilling.

#### 9. If you could have dinner with 3 people from history, who would they be?

Rabindranath Tagore, R. A. Fisher, and Florence Nightingale.

#### 10. Is there anything else you'd like to share with the WSS members?

Volunteer for WSS activities! Be a judge at a local science fair, visit a school and talk to the students to share what a statistician does, and/or be a mentor. Volunteering is a rewarding experience. WSS offers numerous events throughout the year and all these events are organized by volunteers.

## **SPOTLIGHT A WSS MEMBER!**

### **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 submit your nominations or direct any questions to, John Finamore ([jfinamore@nsf.gov](mailto:jfinamore@nsf.gov)), member of the WSS Board.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## SEEKING AWARD NOMINEES

### Roger Herriot Award Nominees

Roger Herriot was the Associate Commissioner of Statistical Standards and Methodology at the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) when he died in 1994. Prior to his service at NCES, he also held several positions at the U.S. Census Bureau, including Chief of the Population Division. Soon after his death, the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association (ASA) along with the Washington Statistical Society (a chapter of ASA) established the Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics. The award 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.

Nominations are sought for the **2016 Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics**. The award is intended to reflect the special characteristics that marked Roger Herriot's career including:

- Dedication to the issues of measurement;
- Improvements in the efficiency of data collection programs; and
- Improvements and use of statistical data for policy analysis.

The award is not limited to senior members of an organization, nor is it to be considered as a culmination of a long period of service. Individuals or teams at all levels within Federal statistical agencies, other government organizations, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, and the academic community may be nominated on the basis of their contributions. As innovation often requires or results from teamwork, team nominations are encouraged. Team innovations often are more lasting, resulting in real paradigm shifts, not just one-off improvements. For an example, see the 1998 Herriot (team) award.

The recipient of the 2016 Roger Herriot Award will be chosen by a committee comprising representatives of the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association, and of the Washington Statistical Society. Roger Herriot was associated with, and strongly supportive of, these organizations during his career. The award consists of a \$1,000 honorarium and a framed citation, which will be presented at a ceremony at the Joint Statistical Meetings in August 2016. The Washington Statistical Society will also host a seminar given by the winner on a subject of his or her own choosing.

Past Award Recipients:

1995 - Joseph Waksberg (Westat)  
1996 - Monroe Sirken (National Center for Health Statistics)  
1997 - Constance Citro (National Academy of Sciences)  
1998 - Roderick Harrison (U.S. Census Bureau), Clyde Tucker (Bureau of Labor Statistics)  
1999 - Thomas Jabine (SSA, EIA, CNSTAT)  
2000 - Donald Dillman (Washington State University)  
2001 - Jeanne Griffith (OMB, NCES, NSF)  
2002 - Daniel Weinberg (U. S. Census Bureau)  
2003 - David Banks (FDA, BTS, NIST)  
2004 - Paula Schneider (U.S. Census Bureau)  
2005 - Robert E. Fay III (U.S. Census Bureau)  
2006 - Nathaniel Schenker (National Center for Health Statistics)  
2007 - Nancy J. Kirkendall (Office of Management and Budget)  
2008 - Elizabeth Martin (U.S. Census Bureau)  
2009 - Lynda Carlson (National Science Foundation)  
2010 - Katharine Abraham (University of Maryland)  
2011 - Michael Messner (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)  
2012 - Paul Biemer (RTI International)  
2013 - Exact Match Team (Social Security Administration, Census Bureau, and Internal Revenue Service)  
2014 - Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics study; Abowd, Haltiwanger, Lane  
2015 - Jennifer Madans (National Center for Health Statistics)

Nominations for the 2016 award will be accepted beginning in **January 2016**. Nomination packages should contain:

- A cover letter from the nominator that includes references to specific examples of the nominee's contributions to innovation in Federal statistics. These contributions can be to methodology, procedure, organization, administration, or other areas of Federal statistics, and need not have been made by or while a Federal employee.
- Up to six additional letters in support that demonstrate the innovativeness of each contribution.
- A current vita for the nominee with current contact information. For team nominations, the vitae of all team members should be included.

The committee may consider nominations made for prior years, but it encourages resubmission of those nominations with updated information.

For more information, contact Dave Hubble, Chair of the 2016 Roger Herriot Award Committee, at 301-610-8814 or davidhubble@westat.com. **Completed packages must be received by April 1, 2016.** Electronic submissions in MS-Word or as a "pdf" file are strongly encouraged.

## **ASA SRMS is seeking applicants for the 2016 JSM Student Travel Award**

The Survey Research Methods Section (SRMS) of the American Statistical Association offers a Student Travel Award for students in any terminal degree program (bachelors, masters, or doctoral) in the area of statistics, survey methodology, or allied survey research disciplines. Support is offered for students to attend the Joint Statistical Meetings, to be held in Chicago, Illinois from July 30 to August 4, 2016.

Preference is given to students presenting a paper or poster at the conference. In addition, applications must be supported by a current member of the SRMS. Approximately 6 awards of up to \$800 each are expected to cover conference expenses. Winners are expected to attend JSM sessions and the SRMS Business meeting to be recognized by our section. Note, previous SRMS student travel award winners and JSM 2016 student paper competition winners are not eligible for this award.

Application forms are available at [http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/travelapp\\_2016.pdf](http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/travelapp_2016.pdf). Deadline for applications is December 15, 2015. If you have any questions, please contact Michael P. Cohen at [mpcohen@juno.com](mailto:mpcohen@juno.com).

~ Michael P. Cohen, ASA SRMS Treasurer

## **SHORT COURSES & GRADUATE PROGRAM**

### **Experimental Design for Surveys**

**JANUARY 21-22, 2016**

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

Presented by Roger Tourangeau

**Registration and Payment Due by January 7, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=012116](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=012116)

### **Issues in Data Science: Unpacking “Big Data”**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2016**

**College Park Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, East Hyattsville, MD**

Presented by Cliff Lampe

**Registration and Payment Due by January 29, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=021216](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=021216)

### **Writing Questions for Writing Questions for Surveys**

**MARCH 10-11, 2016**

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

Presented by Nora Cate Schaeffer

**Registration and Payment Due by February 25, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=031016](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=031016)

### **Introduction to the Federal Statistical System**

**MARCH 24, 2016**

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

Presented by Brian A. Harris-Kojetin and Hermann Habermann

**Registration and Payment Due by March 10, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=032416](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=032416)

### **Using Paradata in a Responsive Design**

**APRIL 6-7, 2016**

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

Presented by James Wagner and Brady T. West

**Registration and Payment Due by March 23, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=040616](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=040616)



**Introduction to Survey Estimation**

**MAY 2-3, 2016**

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

Presented by David Morganstein and Sunghee Lee

**Registration and Payment Due by April 18, 2016**

<https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/htmlcontent.cfm?CourseID=0506>

**Creating and Updating Prices Indexes: Theory and Practice**

**May 23-24, 2016**

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

Presented by Dennis Fixler and Richard Valliant

**Registration and Payment Due by May 9, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=052316](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=052316)

**Synthetic Data: Balancing Confidentiality and Quality in Public Use Files**

**JUNE 13-14, 2016**

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

Presented by Joerg Drechsler and Jerry Reiter

**Registration and Payment Due by May 30, 2016**

[https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html\\_content.cfm?CourseID=061316](https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=061316)

## **University of Michigan Program in Survey Methodology**

The University of Michigan Program in Survey Methodology (MPSM), established in 2001, seeks to train future generations of survey methodologists. The program offers doctorate and master of science degrees and a certificate through the [University of Michigan](#). The program's home is the [Institute for Social Research](#), the world's largest academically-based social science research institute.

MPSM is a program where students learn the science of surveys. Our students study with some of the world's leading survey methodologists while pursuing their Master's or PhD degree. The Program provides a rich intellectual environment for study and work at one of the premier public universities in the world.

MPSM brings together faculty and scientists from the social and behavioral sciences in the [College of Literature, Science, and the Arts](#); the [School of Public Health](#); and the [Institute for Social Research](#). Moreover, the quantitative strengths of disciplines such as communication studies, economics, education, political science, psychology, sociology, and statistics are integral to the empirical underpinnings of the program. With its depth and breadth of curriculum; faculty who are outstanding researchers, teachers, and mentors; exceptional research opportunities at the Institute of Social Research; and the extraordinary range of course offerings at the University of Michigan, the program offers qualified students superb educational opportunities.

Students in the program receive theoretical grounding in all aspects of survey methodology, from sample design and measurement, to modes of data collection, statistical estimation, and probability and distribution theory. Students have the opportunity to explore novel ways to develop applications of survey methodology in a wide variety of fields. Survey methodology principles can be applied to professions such as market research, nursing, public health, natural resources, information sciences, and operations engineering, through courses taken in cognate areas within the rich, diverse academic environment of the University.

**Application Deadlines**

Admissions applications and supporting credentials must be received at the University's Rackham School of Graduate Studies by specific deadlines. These deadlines vary by program.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>
MS & PhD	<b>January 1</b> for study beginning the following fall term
Change of Program, Dual Degree, & Readmission	<b>January 1</b> for study beginning the following fall term
Certificate	<b>April 1</b> for study beginning the following summer term <b>July 1</b> for study beginning the following fall term
Non-Candidate for Degree	<b>One month prior to the first day of classes</b> for study beginning that fall, winter, or spring term

For more information please visit our website at, <http://psm.isr.umich.edu/> or email us at, michpsm.isr@umich.edu.

# FELLOWSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## 2016 ASA/NSF/BLS Fellowship Program

Are you interested in expanding your research to new and interesting domains? Are you doing research that could benefit the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)? If so, consider applying for our Research Fellow Program!

The program's main objective is to facilitate collaboration between academic scholars and government researchers in fields such as statistics, mathematics, economics, survey methodology, behavioral science, and other related fields. Research Fellows have unique opportunities to expand their work to address some of the difficult methodological problems and analytic challenges BLS faces. Fellows are funded to conduct research at the BLS headquarters in Washington, DC, use BLS data and facilities, and work closely with BLS staff.

There is more information available on our website at [http://www.bls.gov/osmr/asa\\_nsf\\_bls\\_fellowship\\_info.htm](http://www.bls.gov/osmr/asa_nsf_bls_fellowship_info.htm) or in our brochure at <http://www.amstat.org/careers/pdfs/ASANSFBLSFellowshipProgram.pdf>. Proposals are due is February 8, 2016.

Fellowship applicants should have a recognized research record and considerable expertise in their area of proposed research. Applicants must submit a detailed research proposal, which will be evaluated on the applicability of the research to BLS programs, the value of the proposed research to science, and the quality of the applicant's research record. Applicants do not need to be U.S. Citizens, but they must be employed by a U.S. institution of higher learning or a non-profit institution (IRS code 501(c)(3) entity) and are expected to retain their position for the duration of the fellowship. U.S. Government employees are not eligible.

We encourage interested researchers to contact us before submitting a proposal, so we can provide assistance in tailoring the proposed topic to best utilize your skills and interests in addressing BLS issues.

The BLS coordinates our Senior Research Fellow Program in cooperation with the American Statistical Association (<http://www.amstat.org/>) (ASA), under a grant from the National Science Foundation (<http://www.nsf.gov/>) (NSF).

Please contact Jeffrey Gonzalez ([Gonzalez.Jeffrey@bls.gov](mailto:Gonzalez.Jeffrey@bls.gov)) if you have any questions.



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**Department:** Clinical  
**Title:** Healthcare Statistical Analyst/ Statistician  
**Status:** Exempt  
**Hours:** Full Time  
**Reports to:** President & CEO

### **Position Summary:**

The Lakhanpal Vein Foundation seeks a healthcare statistician to lead its new research program. This is a hard money, research-focused position with an emphasis on scholarship and publication. This position will allow the healthcare statistician to use his or her statistical knowledge to investigate numerous questions related to treatment and outcomes in venous disease. The healthcare statistician will lead efforts to design research studies using electronic health data, develop analysis protocols, analyze quantitative data, perform multivariate analyses, and author reports summarizing this work for peer-reviewed journals.

### **Minimum Requirements:**

- Master's degree in statistics, biostatistics, public health, epidemiology, economics/econometrics or bachelor's degree in statistics with a demonstrated publications record; PhD a plus
- Minimum of 3 years of work using advanced analytic and or statistical methodology
- Minimum of 2 years of healthcare experience or work in the healthcare field preferred
- Experience using SAS, STATA, R, or similar statistical software
- Comprehensive knowledge of statistics including inferential statistics, multivariate regression, advanced modeling, predictive analytics, graphical display, and missing data analysis
- English proficiency, both verbally and in writing, for the purposes of research publication and presentation, is required
- Preference will be given to candidates with experience in cardiovascular disease and those with demonstrated experience with scholarly publishing

### **Qualifications:**

- Self-motivated and able to work with minimal direct supervision and drive results with disciplined follow through
- An inquisitive and innovative nature, excellent critical and analytical thinking, integrity, willingness to step into new roles, strong communication and facilitation skills, team focused mentality, and a commitment to continuously learning and improving
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to identify optimal data sources and statistical analyses to meet project objectives

**Duties and Responsibilities:*****Statistical***

- Work with surgeons and consultants to conceptualize manuscripts and articulate testable hypotheses
- Identify statistical methods that can be applied to address specific project questions/problems
- Analyze and interpret statistical data to identify statistically significant and clinically relevant differences in relationships related to venous disease
- Assist in designing research projects that apply valid statistical techniques
- Conduct sample size determinations and power analyses as needed for specific projects
- Plan multivariate and multi-variable statistical analyses including developing regression models
- Process large datasets for statistical modeling and graphic analysis
- Prepare data for analysis by organizing information and performing quality control checks such as outlier analyses
- Advise team members in determining necessary data and optimal analytic techniques
- Identify and recommend alternative data/methods to meet project needs in most efficient way
- Attend and actively participate in staff, data/operations, and meetings for multiple projects
- Follow all applicable privacy and confidentiality procedures in daily work

***Reporting, Writing, and Communication***

- Report results of statistical analyses, including information in the form of graphs, charts, and tables
- Independently document project tasks and specifications
- Take the lead in writing the “methods” and “results” sections of scholarly manuscripts in a manner consistent with accepted practice
- Prepare data briefs, web content and other written products using results from statistical analyses
- Work with colleagues to write and edit “introduction” and “conclusions” sections of scholarly manuscripts, including PubMed literature searches
- Manage the manuscript submission process
- Write and manage research-related content for the Lakhanpal Vein Foundation’s website
- Interact with, and build relationships with internal and external Foundation stakeholders

Center for Vein Restoration is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer



## ***Psychometrician***

**Assessment Department**

**Washington, DC Office**

**Position Description**

### **Summary**

**FLSA STATUS: Exempt**

A leader in international education, academic exchange, and overseas language immersion, American Councils for International Education provides proficiency-based training and assessment in more than ten less-commonly taught languages. The American Council's assessment department develops and administers customized online tests of language proficiency and learning progress.

To provide psychometric analysis, statistical guidance and planning of test development, American Councils is seeking a psychometrician to join our Washington, DC office.

### **Responsibilities**

The psychometrician conducts statistical analyses of test items and complex assessment instruments and guides content development specialists and language teachers in the interpretation of the results. Additional operational tasks include reviews of test forms, sampling, forms linking and equating, item data reviews, standard settings and preparation of technical reports.

### **Job Functions**

- Perform and monitor statistical analyses required for data reporting and interpretation of results under general supervision
- Write and deliver reports and presentations that describe technical characteristics of assessments for a broad-ranging audience
- Represent American Councils' position on technical issues to professional associations and in client meetings
- Ensure the quality of deliverables
- Assist in developing, designing and documenting technical and operational procedures and statistical guidelines
- Conduct research and special analyses and contribute to the development of data interpretation materials and publications
- Assist in planning, coordinating and conducting statistical work for circumscribed projects

- Provide technical leadership deploying robust psychometric models and analytic techniques as new requirements and architectures evolve
- Apply sufficient knowledge of statistical procedures, psychometric methods and statistical programming to work independently on most aspects of statistical analysis work, while receiving instruction and guidance in other aspects
- Build prototypes of measurement models in software and conduct reliability and performance tests on them
- Develop requirements to support AC's complex and evolving measurement engine, working in conjunction with software architects

### **Qualifications**

- Ph.D., ABD or Masters in Statistics, Psychological Measurement, Educational Measurement, Psychometrics, or related field with an emphasis on quantitative analysis or psychometrics
- Training in psychometric research and statistics; examples may include item response theory, scaling and equating, Monte Carlo methods and sample design
- Related experience, including assessment systems, sampling theory and item response theory
- Advanced computer programming skills, especially in R, SQL, Python, C++/C# or Java languages
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a diverse professional team in an operational environment
- Solid interpersonal and communications skills in written and spoken English
- Fluency in a second language is desirable

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY** – American Councils is committed to taking affirmative steps to enhance employment opportunities for minorities, women, veterans, and people with disabilities, and strives to ensure that meaningful employment and promotional opportunities are maintained for everyone. American Councils' commitment to equal employment opportunity is based not only on federal requirements, but also on a longstanding commitment to maintaining a diverse workforce reflective of the communities in which we operate.

**TO APPLY:** Select this link and follow the prompts:

<https://home.eease.adp.com/recruit/?id=15035051>



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## **FROM THE WSS NEWS EDITOR**

Items for publication in the **February, 2016** issue of WSS NEWS will be accepted thru the **20<sup>th</sup>** of **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. Announcements with track changes will not be accepted.

Please submit all materials as an attachment in **MS WORD** or **plain text**. Submissions in any other format will be returned.

**PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR ITEMS IN PDF OR IN THE BODY OF AN EMAIL.**