

WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

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FROM THE WSS PAST PRESIDENT

2015-2016 WSS Annual Report

The Washington Statistical Society (WSS) did many things during July 2015-June 2016 to "...foster statistical science, statistical research, and the interests of the statistical profession and to promote unity and effectiveness of effort among all groups concerned with statistical matters", as described in Article 2 of the WSS Constitution. These activities occurred because of the volunteer effort of many WSS members and friends of WSS. I thank everyone who contributed to WSS's activities by generously volunteering their time.

Notable events:

August 3, 2015: Summer Conference Preview/Review, a joint effort of WSS and DC-AAPOR beginning in 2012. As was true for the previous three years, the event was well-attended and a financial success for WSS and DC-AAPOR as well.

November 17, 2015: 25th Morris Hansen Lecture, given by Steve Thompson. Well-attended, with the traditional reception afterward.

December 2, 2015: WSS Holiday Party at The Vault in the District ChopHouse & Brewery, where the WSS Holiday Party was in 2001. The party was well-attended. We did miss the presence of long-time WSS Holiday Party "Santa", Art Kendall, who moved to Florida in 2015.

April 13, 2016: President's Invited Lecture, given by JPSM Professor Frauke Kreuter, with a reception afterward.

June 28, 2016: Gertrude M. Cox Award presentation and WSS Annual Dinner. Both events were well-attended.

Awards and Prizes:

WSS sponsors and co-sponsors many awards and prizes. Below is the list of the awards and prizes and the 2016 winners:

Gertrude Cox Award, co-sponsored by WSS and RTI International: Bhramar Mukherjee. An article about Professor Mukherjee and the Cox Award appeared in the May 2016 Amstat News: <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2016/05/02/people-may16/>

Roger Herriot Award, co-sponsored by the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association (ASA) and WSS: Thesia Garner, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Kathy Short, Census Bureau. An article about the award winners and the Herriott Award appeared in the August 2016 Amstat News: <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2016/08/01/peoplenews-aug16/>

Julius Shiskin Award, co-sponsored by WSS, the National Association for Business Economics, and the Business and Economics Statistics Section of the American Statistical Association: John Abowd. An article about Mr. Abowd and the Shiskin Award appeared in the July 2016 Amstat News: <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2016/07/01/peoplenews-jul16/>

Curtis Jacobs Memorial Award, sponsored by WSS: Niharika Vattikonda and Sanjana Challa, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Fairfax, VA; advisor, Mr. Larsen.

Jeanne Griffith Mentoring Award, co-sponsored by the Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections of ASA, NORC, Westat, American Institutes for Research, American Educational Research Association, The Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics, Stata, WSS, and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy: Diane Willimack, U.S. Census Bureau.

Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship, co-sponsored by the Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections of ASA, WSS, the Caucus for Women in Statistics, Harris-Smith Institutes, Mathematica Policy Research, and Synectics for Management Decisions, Inc.: Maria Cuellar, Carnegie Mellon University.

WSS Student Travel Award, established in 2014: Xia Li, University of Maryland.

WSS Poster Competition Winners:

Grades K – 3:

1st place: Quinn Shields, Carderock Springs Elementary, Bethesda, MD; advisor, Ms. Stoszek.
2nd place: Xander Sehgal, Mundo Verde, Washington, DC; advisor, Ms. Poss.

Grades 4 – 6:

1st place: Grace Ko and Eszter Ccenteri, Willow Spring Elementary School, Fairfax, VA; advisors: Mr. Van Hoose and Mr. Kyung Dae Ko.
2nd place: Nandini Ghattaram, Jeffers Hill Elementary School, Columbia, MD; advisor, Ms. Gopalakrishnan.
Honorable mention: Andrew Xu, Farmland Elementary School, Rockville, MD; advisor: Ms. Murphy.
Honorable mention: Meredith Turcotte, Orange Hunt Elementary School, Springfield, VA; advisor: Ms. Jones

Grades 10 – 12:

Honorable mention: Iraj Subramaniam, Northwest High School, Germantown, MD; advisor: Ms. Mitra

WSS Outstanding Graduate Student Awards:

Sepideh Mosaferi, University of Maryland, Joint Program in Survey Methodology
Brandon Park, George Mason University
Xuan Yao, University of Maryland
Mingxing "George" Du, Georgetown University
Xiaying "James" Zheng, University of Maryland
Li Cheung, George Washington University

WSS President's Awards:

WSS Communications: Colleen Choi, Vince Massimini, Tom Mule.
WSS Electronic Archives: Michael Feil, Dan Jacobs.
WSS Head Science Fair Judges: Lee Abramson, Promod Chandhok, Michael Messner, Dan Sherman.

ASA Award for Outstanding Chapter Service:

This award, formerly known as the Chapter Service Award, is an award that WSS is allowed to give on a rotating basis with other ASA Chapters. The current rotation cycle is once every three years. In 2016, Diane Herz, Mike Larsen, and I chose Keith Rust to be the recipient.

WSS Members Chosen as 2016 ASA Fellows:

The following eight WSS members became new ASA Fellows in 2016:
Paul Beatty, U.S. Census Bureau.
Jonaki Bose, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
Barry Johnson, IRS Statistics of Income Division.
Ruth Ann Killion, U.S. Census Bureau.
Renee Miller, U.S. Energy Information Administration.
Van Parsons, National Center for Health Statistics.
Gene Pennello, Food and Drug Administration.
Michael Sinclair, Mathematica Policy Research.

The WSS Committee on ASA Fellows (Polly Phipps, Chair; Cynthia Clark, Debbie Griffin, Jill DeMatteis) worked on the five of the eight successful nominations (as coordinators, supporting statement and letter writers).

Membership, Finance:

WSS membership remained stable during the term, consisting of approximately 875 ASA/WSS members and approximately 75 Associate members. WSS's finances also are stable; dues remained unchanged during the term.

Setting aside Westat's replenishment of the Hansen fund in December 2015, WSS's finances incurred a minor loss during the term. Major revenue sources are dues, short courses, and the Summer Conference Preview/Review. Major expenses are social events and awards/events that WSS sponsors or co-sponsors. A one-time minor loss occurred due to the Associate member transition

that is described below. All Associate members as of January 1, 2016 were given a free calendar year membership, as an alternative to attempting to collect partial year dues as part of the transition.

Quantitative Literacy and Statistics Education:

WSS continued its extensive annual efforts in this area during the term. WSS members served as science fair judges at five DC metro area science fairs in the spring of 2016. WSS members helped to staff the ASA booth at the USA Science & Engineering Festival in April, 2016. WSS Quantitative Literacy volunteers took part in the Poster Competition judging and solicited Curtis Jacobs Award submissions.

The Statistics Education Committee organized seminars and a panel discussion.

WSS was a co-sponsor of the ASA DC DataFest 2016, which occurred April 8-10. Teams of undergraduate students from several DC metro area colleges competed in a data-analysis event for prizes and the attention of potential employers.

Short Course:

January 6, 2016: WSS Short Course, "Art and Practice of Classification and Regression Trees", taught by Professor Wei-Yin Loh.

Noteworthy Changes:

The membership term of WSS Associate members was changed to calendar year duration, effective January 1, 2016. The WSS By-Laws, Article 1, Section 5 (Associate member term), was revised by a Board vote. An online Associate member enrollment/renewal mechanism was implemented concurrently. This paradigm will make the Secretary's maintenance of the WSS Associate membership list much easier than the previous sequences of twelve month duration memberships, staggered monthly throughout the calendar year.

Creation of the Associate member online enrollment/renewal mechanism required WSS to open a PayPal account to process credit card payments. This in turn allowed WSS to start exploring the use of Eventbrite in tandem with the PayPal account as a WSS social event registration mechanism. WSS is exploring Eventbrite/PayPal as an alternative to using 123Signup, the registration mechanism provided by ASA. Social coordinator Ranjana Kohli's expertise with Eventbrite allowed WSS to quickly set up use of Eventbrite for the 2015 Holiday Party and the 2016 Annual Dinner.

The historic content of the WSS website was broadened, thanks in large part to archives supplied by former WSS Webmaster Dan Jacobs and former WSS newsletter editor Mike Feil. Additionally, many gaps have been filled in the archive of Gertrude M. Cox presentations.

Links to videos of the last three Hansen lectures are now available at <http://washstat.org/hansen/#PROGRAMS>, thanks to the efforts of several WSS members and friends at NASS.

Tim Allen stepped down as WSS Webmaster. During his term that began in 2014, Tim carried out a major renovation of the WSS website. Jonathan Lisic has become the new WSS Webmaster. WSS website work also is being done by 1-2 other WSS members. A good paradigm for the future is to have more than one WSS member who is capable of doing WSS website maintenance.

An update of the WSS Handbook was completed. This update was coordinated by Representatives-at-Large Wendy Barboza and Erin Tanenbaum.

The timing of soliciting applications for the WSS Student Travel Award was moved to the fall from the spring, to follow a similar timeline to student travel award solicitations by several ASA Sections.

Future Challenges:

WSS seminars are less frequent than they once were, and attendance sometimes is low. The format of having a group of presentations with a common theme, which occurred several times during the term thanks to the efforts of people such as Mike Fleming, Don Jang, and Pam McGovern, seems to be a success, but these are more challenging to organize.

The ASA Student Chapter program is still relatively new. Both ASA and Chapters such as WSS have learning to do about supporting new and existing Student Chapters.

The WSS Student Travel Award is still relatively new, and currently does not require the winner to give a presentation at the Joint Statistical Meetings. Now that the timeline for solicitation is more similar to ASA Section student travel awards to do require a presentation, WSS may want to consider adding this requirement at some point in the future.

Conclusion:

WSS accomplishes so much because many WSS members and friends volunteer their time.

The 2015-2016 WSS Board worked together smoothly. I thank all Board members for their service. Board members such as Treasurer Jill Dever and Secretary Darcy Miller helped me keep WSS's business functions well-organized during the term.

The "three Presidents" (President-Elect, President, and Past President) often work as a team. I am grateful to my teammates Diane Herz (Past President) and Mike Larsen (President-Elect) for their cooperation and advice during my term.

WSS is a wonderful organization. It has been an honor and a pleasure for me to serve as WSS President during 2015-2016.

~ Chris Moriarity

SEMINARS & CONFERENCE

Title: **Possible Irregularities in the 2016 Presidential Election**

Date/Time: **October 4, 2016,
12:30-2:30 p.m.**

Speakers: Beth Clarks,
Mark Lindeman,
Philip Stark,
Lulu Fries' dat, and
Virginia Martin

Chair: Fritz Scheuren

Sponsor: WSS Data Collection Methods Section

Abstract: American Presidential Elections always have a special fascination for statisticians. The 2016 election is of special interest since the outcome remains far from certain. A month before the U.S. Presidential election, on Tuesday, October 4, there will be a statistical session at the BLS Conference Center consisting of a distinguished panel of nonpartisan election experts at the BLS Conference Center on this topic. The session will begin at the usual time (12:30pm). But because of the topic it will run a little longer (until 2:30pm). In separate mailings the speakers may provide details on their perspectives beforehand.

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Room 3

REGISTRATION REQUIRED: To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to 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.

WebEx: Video Conferencing
<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=m40922d8f1582795d75915f53b45b89be>

Meeting number: 643 225 393
Meeting password: Wss-041016

For Audio: Call-in toll-free number (Verizon): 1-866-747-9048 (US)
Call-in number (Verizon): 1-517-233-2139 (US)
(US) Attendee access code: 938 454 2

Note: Particular computer configurations might not be compatible with WebEx.

PLEASE FORWARD THIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE TOPIC

Title: **Statistics and Presidential Elections**

Date/Time: **October 7, 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: Clyde Tucker, CNN and American Institutes for Research and Bureau of Labor Statistics (retired)

Chair: Carol L. Howald, Assistant Professor and Co-Chair, Department of Mathematics, Howard Community College

Sponsor: WSS Statistics Education Committee, Gonzaga College High School, and The Washington-Baltimore Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (DC-AAPOR)

Abstract: Dr. Tucker is the chief statistician for CNN for their November election forecasts. In this talk he will describe how CNN and other networks make their election night decision as to when they have enough information to provide the public with projected winners. The talk will be understandable to a wide audience, including high school and college students and faculty members, with only a knowledge of introductory statistics.

Location: Gonzaga College High School - 19 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001 – Cantwell Hall, Room 222. 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. You will then be on the 2nd floor. Turn right to where Room 222 is located.

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. You will then be on the 2nd floor. Turn right where Room 222 is located.

RSVP:

To be placed on the seminar attendance list, please email Carol Joyce Blumberg at cblumberg@gmail.com by October 5, 2016.

Remote Access:

If you want to attend the seminar remotely, using video and/or audio, contact cblumberg@gmail.com by October 5, 2016. Instructions will be provided to you around **October 5, 2016**.

POC email:

Carol Joyce Blumberg, cblumberg@gmail.com

Title: **Improving the Diagnostic Accuracy of a Stratified Screening Strategy by Identifying the Optimal Risk Cutoff**

Date/Time: **October 26, 2016**
9:30–11:00 am

Speaker: Deborah H. Glueck, Ph.D.,
Associate Professor of Biostatistics and Radiology,
The Colorado School of Public Health-UC Denver

Abstract: **Purpose:** We give a novel approach for finding the optimal risk cutoff for additional breast cancer screening for women who have a high model-predicted risk of breast cancer.

Methods: The American Cancer Society (ACS) suggests a stratified screening strategy for breast cancer. The strategy includes assessing women's risk of breast cancer using a risk model, screening women at high risk of breast cancer with both contrast-enhanced breast MRI, and mammography, and screening women at low risk of breast cancer with mammography alone. The ACS used expert consensus opinion to choose the risk cutoff for additional screening.

Instead, we suggest a risk cutoff chosen to maximize the full area under the receiver operating characteristic curve for the strategy. We use three inputs to find the cutoff, including: 1) the distribution of five-year breast cancer risk scores, 2) the probability of breast cancer given the risk score, and 3) the diagnostic accuracy of digital mammography, and contrast-enhanced screening breast MRI.

No data was publically available for testing the performance of stratified screening strategies based on the ACS suggested risk models. Instead, we used publically available data to seek an optimal risk cutoff for the Breast Cancer Screening Consortium (BCSC) risk model. A previous study suggests that the BCSC risk model has similar predictive accuracy as the Tyrer-Cuzick and Claus models. For comparison, we used a hypothetical risk model with much better predictive accuracy than the BCSC model.

Results: For the BCSC risk model, the strategy with the highest diagnostic accuracy for the entire population is to screen almost all women with both digital mammography and contrast-enhanced breast MRI. With a hypothetical but much better performing risk model, there is a clear cutoff that maximizes diagnostic accuracy.

Conclusion: The results occur because the BCSC risk model does not accurately predict which women will or will not develop breast cancer. However, if there were a more accurate risk model, a stratified screening strategy would offer benefits for the entire population, by balancing the harms of breast cancer screening with the potential for improved breast cancer detection.

Location:

Room 3E032/034,
NCI Shady Grove,
9609 Medical Center Drive; Rockville MD

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

Title: **Engaging Students in Statistical Investigations with Census at School and Other Projects**

Date/Time: **November 15, 2016**

4:00–5:30 p.m.

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

Speaker: Rebecca Nichols, Director of Education, American Statistical Association

Chair: Kathy Robens, Montgomery Blair High School

Sponsors: WSS Statistics Education Committee and Gonzaga College High School

Location: Gonzaga College High School - 19 I 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. Turn left at top of stairs and go 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. Turn left at top of stairs and go to Room 307.

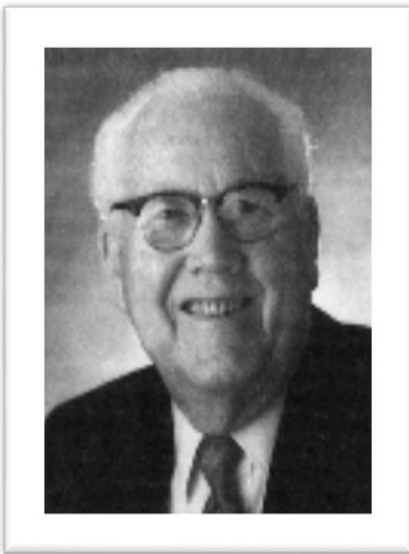
RSVP: To be placed on the seminar attendance list, please email Carol Joyce Blumberg at cblumberg@gmail.com by November 13, 2016.

Abstract: The ASA's *Guidelines for Assessment and Instruction in Statistics Education (GAISE) Pre-K–12 Report* (www.amstat.org/education/gaise) recommends teaching statistics as an investigative process. This talk will

discuss how the statistics concepts in the Common Core State Standards can be taught while guiding students through statistical investigations using their own data with Census at School and other projects. Census at School (www.amstat.org/censusatschool) is an international classroom project that engages students in statistical problem solving using their own real data. Students complete a brief online survey, analyze their class census results, and compare their class with random samples of participating students in the United States and other countries. The ASA and WSS poster and project competitions (www.amstat.org/education/studentcompetitions.cfm) also motivate students to ask questions about the world that can be answered with data. Although Census at School and the poster and project competitions are targeted for K-12 statistics education, there are outreach opportunities for statisticians and statistics students to bring these resources to the schools. Also, the data sources and ideas can be adapted for an introductory statistics audience at the undergraduate level. Similar opportunities for undergraduate students include ASA DataFest (<https://www.amstat.org/education/datafest/>) and the Undergraduate Statistics Project Competition (<https://www.causeweb.org/usproc/>).

POC email: Carol Joyce Blumberg, cblumberg@gmail.com

Remote Access: If you want to attend the seminar remotely, using video and/or audio, contact cblumberg@gmail.com by **November 13, 2016**. Instructions will be provided to you around November 10, 2016.



26th Annual Morris Hansen Lecture

Hard-to-Survey Populations and the U.S. Decennial Census

Speaker: Nancy Bates

*Senior Researcher for Survey Methodology
U.S. Census Bureau*

Discussants:

Brad Edwards, Vice President
Westat, Rockville, MD

Linda Jacobsen, Vice President, U.S. Programs,
Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC

Abstract: This presentation will profile historically hard-to-survey populations in the U.S. Decennial Census. The talk will emphasize methods for locating these populations and the emergence of social marketing campaigns as a means to encourage participation. Drawing upon experience from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 censuses, I will discuss why a population may be hard to survey using the framework set forth by Tourangeau (2014), i.e. hard to identify, locate, persuade, or interview. The lecture will describe methods used in previous Censuses to define and locate hard-to-count segments of the population and describe techniques the agency has employed to overcome the challenges. The talk will include results from a recent test of a new response platform planned for the 2020 Census (digital advertising). The presentation will also discuss the Low Response Score (LRS), a new metric to identify Census tracts and block groups containing a high proportion of hard-to-survey households. The presentation will also demonstrate a prototype LRS mapping application designed to help field staff, Census managers, partnership specialists, local officials, and other community stakeholders locate, map, and more easily describe hard-to-survey areas under their jurisdiction.

Nancy Bates is Senior Researcher for Survey Methodology at the U.S. Census Bureau. Her research interests include hard-to-survey populations, survey nonresponse, measurement error, and the collection and analysis of survey paradata. She co-chaired the International Conference on Surveying and Enumerating Hard-to-Count Populations and is a co-editor of the conference monograph *Hard to Survey Populations*. She developed the audience segmentation for the 2010 Census social marketing campaign and more recently helped produce a new metric to locate hard-to-survey populations (the Low Response Score). Nancy Bates is a fellow of the American Statistical Association (ASA), Associate Editor of the *Journal of Official Statistics*, and past president of the Washington Statistical Society. She has served on the Executive Council of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the Board of the Government Statistics Section of the ASA, and is a member of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology. She is a distinguished alumna of the University of Oklahoma College of Arts and Sciences.

Tuesday, November 29, 2016

3:30 – 5:30 pm

*Jefferson Auditorium, US
Department of Agriculture*

Independence Avenue

(between 12th and 14th Streets)

At the Smithsonian Metro Station

(Blue/Orange/Silver lines)

A reception will follow at 5:30 pm in the
Whitten Building Patio.

Please pre-register for this event to help
facilitate access to the building on line at
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/morrishansen/>



Sponsored By:



Washington
Statistical Society



StatFest 2016

<http://community.amstat.org/cmis/events/statfest>

September 24, 2016

Howard University, Washington, DC
L.K. Downing Hall Auditorium, Room 1020

StatFest is a one-day conference aimed at encouraging undergraduate students from historically underrepresented groups to consider careers and graduate studies in the statistical sciences. The conference is an ongoing initiative of the American Statistical Association through its Committee on Minorities in Statistics. The conference includes presentations from established professionals, academic leaders, and current graduate students that will help attendees understand the opportunities and routes for success in the field. Panel forums include information and tips for a rewarding graduate student experience, achieving success as an academic statistician, opportunities in the private and government arenas, among other topics.

We are excited that StatFest will be held at Howard University, one of the nation's most prestigious historically black universities, on Saturday, September 24, 2016. The conference program is currently under development although it will share a number of features with previous StatFest conferences. **A link to the StatFest 2015 program is provided [here](#).**

Attendance is free although registration is required to help in planning the event. Please follow this [link](#) to register.

For more information please contact Talitha Washington at talitha.washington@howard.edu or Jesse Chittams at chittams@nursing.upenn.edu.

Sponsors

StatFest 2016 is made possible due to the generous support of the following sponsors: The American Statistical Association, Howard University, The Greater Young Society, Emory University, and Abbott Laboratories.

Organizing Committee for StatFest 2016:

Adrian Coles, Jesse Chittams, Nicholas Horton, Monica Jackson, Neal Jeffries, Joe King, Renee' Moore, Nagambal Shah, Talitha Washington

WSS MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

Washington Statistical Society

Member Spotlight

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

Meet WSS Member Charles “Mike” Fleming...

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

I retired from the Federal government, but I still teach statistics part-time at the George Washington University. I worked at the National Agricultural Statistics Service in survey statistics and later at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as an internal statistical consultant to automotive safety engineers and human behavioral scientists.

2. What attracted you to your current position?

Over the course of teaching statistics for the past eighteen years, I usually incorporate examples of using statistics drawn from my government job into my lectures to illustrate how classroom statistical concepts can actually be used to critique the published statistics associated with some popular issue. The engineers and behavioral scientists appreciated how those same statistical concepts could clarify their understanding of the subject and could refine their arguments. Together with seeing the results of a well designed survey, I found that such productive use of statistics made the job more appealing.

3. Finish this sentence: “I joined WSS to...”

I was recruited by Phil Kott when he was president of the WSS in 1996 to serve on the Statistical Computing Program Committee. He argued that the WSS provides an excellent venue to meet statisticians; he was right. One of the important benefits of attending a WSS seminar, for example, in person rather than vicariously via the Internet, is to socialize with statisticians of other agencies or companies on a mutually interesting subject. It was a common occurrence to see, in the 30 seminars and five conferences which I organized during my tenure on the WSS Board, members of the audience exchanging business cards or offering to collaborate with the speakers on their projects. For a similar reason, Tom Jabine, Mel Kollander, and I founded the Senior Statisticians Society. The Society's goal is to bring together senior members of the Washington, D.C. statistical community for a chance to socialize with colleagues, share ideas and to provide an informal venue to learn about the outstanding achievements and careers of its members and the latest developments in the statistical profession



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

The advice which I give to my students is the same advice which I would give to someone who wishes to enter the statistical profession. I recommend a double major: one in statistics and one in another discipline like engineering, physical sciences, social sciences, economics, or finance. Even a theoretical statistician benefits by having some subject matter expertise, because it is very difficult to understand how to apply or to derive a statistical method without understanding the underlying phenomenon.

5. What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

In my retirement, I have set three goals: to continue doing scholarship; to contribute in the effort to preserve Social Security and Medicare; and to study astronomy. I like the natural sciences. I received a bachelors degree in Chemistry. I resumed studying it after my military service at the graduate level specializing in physical chemistry and statistical mechanics in particular, only later to get a masters degree in Mathematics with a heavy dose of probability and statistics thrown-in. I found it very interesting how statistics can extract information from sets of data, and I learned the importance of designing a good experiment to create informative sets of data. As a result, I sought employment in the statistical profession as well as in the quality control profession within manufacturing.

6. What was your first job?

Co-incidentally, at the conclusion of my studies, the newly implemented economic policies of Ronald Reagan began to destroy manufacturing in Milwaukee, my hometown. The decline in manufacturing there continues to this day. Where once large and profitable industries had existed, there are now parking lots and retail stores. I point out to my wife when we visit Milwaukee the locations where those industries had existed. "Do you see that shopping strip? That was where Allis-Chalmers had been. Twenty thousand men worked there. It had the world's largest lathe. Not anymore." The job market for statisticians, quality engineers, and chemists completely evaporated. For several years, I took a lot of part-time jobs until the hiring freeze imposed by Ronald Reagan on the Federal government was lifted. My first civilian payroll

job with benefits was with the Federal government which eventually some years later transferred me to Washington, D.C.

7. What is your greatest accomplishment?

In place of describing my greatest accomplishment, I will say that my best job was working for five years as a volunteer at a soup kitchen in downtown Milwaukee. We served 350 meals for breakfast Monday through Friday. I had the finest co-workers who came from all walks of life, from the very wealthy to those who were destitute and from a wide spectrum of religions. We prepared and served meals to an astonishing array of patrons. It was not easy work, but it was a very rewarding job.

8. What is the last book you read?

My favorite literary work is the "Odyssey". Over the last twenty years, I have developed a strong interest in Greek antiquity, especially in ancient Greek mathematics and literature. I admire the philosophical precision of thought expressed in the language and art. I do pay attention to current events. The last book which I just read is "Unmaking of the Public University" written by Christopher Newfield. I am currently reading Mark Twain's "Roughing It" and the next

book on my list to read is "Killing the Host" written by Michael Hudson.

9. What is your favorite song/artist/genre?

Since I play trombone, any music with trombone parts will probably appeal to me. The more trombone parts, the better. I enjoy playing in a trombone choir or in a brass quintet. I play in the Vienna Community Band, Nitehawks Swing Band, and in the pit orchestra of the Hexagon. Squeezed into that schedule, I spend time keeping bees and enjoying time spent with my family and friends.

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, Tom Krenzke (tomkrenzke@westat.com), member of the WSS Board.

We look forward to hearing from you.

STUDENT CORNER

On December 2015 when I submitted the application, I thought it would be a great experience even if I weren't selected at the end. One month later I received an email notification saying that I was the winner! I was very grateful for this travel support and started to look forward to my first JSM.

Everyone knows that JSM has been one of the largest statistical events in the world. I was new to almost everything, from registering a conference to submitting an abstract. I was told that besides attending the lectures and talks on different topics, there are tremendous opportunities to experience and learn different new things. Then I volunteered to be a session chair and also registered career services and uploaded my resume. Before heading to Chicago, I already had a very busy schedule booked.

On my first day after the first-time-attendee orientation, I served as a session chair for my first time with the topic on small area estimation. Fortunately, I collected many pieces of useful advice from my advisor, Dr. Eric Slud, a lady met on shuttle who works at FDA and has served as a session chair for many times, and also from the round table discussion during the first-time-attendee orientation. During May to June, I contacted each speaker to get "proof of evidence" requested by JSM. This time I was able to meet and talk to them in person. As the session chair, my primary job was to briefly introduce each speaker to the audience and carefully timed their presentation, making sure that each talk was completed on time. I felt a little nervous but the whole session went very well at the end.

My poster presentation was scheduled on Aug 1st. My poster, titled as "Misspecified sampling weights in weight-smoothing methods" is a part of my dissertation studies. . At the beginning when every speaker including me was setting up, there were not many audiences passing by. So I had time watching and talking to my neighbors. One of them traveled from German. We introduced and explained our own research and posters to each other. During the two-hour period, I had many great discussions with other statisticians and my advisor also came. Their valuable questions and insightful suggestions inspire me to think about my research in deeper ways.

JSM offers numerous excellent talks on various topics. I went to the talk given by Dr. Jae-kwang Kim, which focused on clustered sampling. I attended the session entitled "What's wrong with p-value?" I was very curious about what would be brought up during this session as the discussions on p-value have recently attracted remarkable attention in both statistical and application fields. In addition, attending the Intensive Visualizations and Web Applications for Analytics for Dr. Yihui Xie's talk was an interesting experience that I could see him in person, as while I spent days and nights doing R-programming homework assignments and learning stuff on markdown, knitr, I always sought for help from Dr. Xie's blog.

Another exciting experience was that I spent three hours in total at the career service center, finishing my first round of job interviews. Though I'm not a graduate-soon-student, I realize that it would benefit greatly to accumulate some experiences. I did receive multiple emails and scheduled three interviews during JSM. It was also freshness to get dressed, check interviewers' LinkedIn profiles, and sit at the waiting area to be called. The job interviews during JSM are very similar to phone screenings. I mainly answered behavioral questions and didn't get any technical question, but talking to experienced statisticians from different industries was such a valuable experience. It was a significant exercise for my future job hunting.

Besides, I spent my odd moments at the EXPO and met previous intern managers. I didn't expect to meet so many old friends that I haven't seen for a long time, but when I did I was so glad that I got this award and made this trip possible with the help of WSS.

On Wed Aug 4th evening before leaving Chicago, I attended the JSM Survey Research Methods Business Meeting. Many survey statisticians gathered together and my friends and I enjoyed the relaxing moment as well as nice drinks and snacks after having four busy and productive days in JSM. During the meeting, the president of the Washington Statistical Society Mike Larson presented the award to me and it was such a great honor for me! I appreciate WSS providing me this travel award. I really enjoyed my first JSM and look forward to JSM 2017.

WORKSHOPS & SHORT COURSES

Short course: STATISTICAL LEARNING AND DATA MINING IV

State-of-the-Art Statistical Methods for Data Science Including Sparse Models and Deep Learning

Trevor Hastie and Robert Tibshirani, Stanford University

Georgetown Conference Center, Washington DC

Oct 19-20, 2016

This new two-day course gives a detailed and modern overview of statistical models used by data scientists for prediction and inference. With the rapid developments in internet technology, genomics, financial risk modeling, and other high-tech industries, we rely increasingly more on data analysis and statistical models to exploit the vast amounts of data at our fingertips.

In this course we emphasize the tools useful for tackling modern-day data analysis problems. Many of these are essential building blocks, but we also include techniques at the cutting-edge of technology for handling big-data problems. From the vast array of tools available, we have selected what we consider are the most relevant and exciting. Our list of topics include:

- Linear methods: regression, logistic regression (binary and multiclass), Cox model.
- Bootstrap, cross-validation, and permutation methods.
- Regularized linear models: ridge, lasso, elastic net. Post-selection inference. Glmnet package in R, and other software.
- Trees, random forests, and boosting.
- Unsupervised methods: clustering (prototype, hierarchical, spectral,...), principal components and other low-rank methods, sparse decompositions.
- support-vector machines and kernel methods.
- Deep learning and neural networks.

Our earlier courses are not a prerequisite for this new course. Although there is overlap with past courses, our new course contains topics not covered by us before. We illustrate many of the methods using examples developed in R.

The material is based on recent papers by the authors and other researchers, as well as our best-selling book:

Elements of Statistical Learning: data mining, inference and prediction (2nd Edition) (with J. Friedman, Springer-Verlag, 2009).

The lectures will consist of high-quality projected presentations and discussion. A copy of Elements of Statistical Learning will be given to all attendees, as well as a color booklet containing the course slides in a convenient two-up, double-sided format.

The authors have two other popular books that are also relevant to this course:

- An Introduction to Statistical Learning, with applications in R (with Gareth James and Daniela Witten, Springer-Verlag, 2013).
- Statistical Learning with Sparsity: the Lasso and Generalizations (with Martin Wainwright, Chapman and Hall, 2015).
- All three books are available for free in pdf form from our websites

The lectures will consist of video-projected presentations and discussion.

For more information, see <http://web.stanford.edu/~hastie/sldm.html>.

SAPW/2016: The 1st Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop Friday, November 4, 2016

- Check-in:** 8:00—9:00 am
- Schedule:** 9:00 am—4:00 pm
(Plenary and concurrent session schedule to follow)
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Janet Norwood Conference Center
2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20212
- Organizers:** Brian Monsell, Kathleen McDonald-Johnson, and Demetra Lytras, U.S. Census Bureau; Wendy Martinez, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Abstract Submission Due:** **August 15, 2016 to**
esmd.seasonal.workshop@census.gov
- Register Online By:** **November 2, 2016 at noon** at [EventBrite](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/seasonal-adjustment-practitioners-workshop-tickets-24517370114)
(<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/seasonal-adjustment-practitioners-workshop-tickets-24517370114>)
There is no charge for participation.

Description

The Washington Statistics Society is proud to sponsor the 1st Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop. The SAPW 2016 is a one-day conference for public employees and those actively involved in seasonal adjustment, so they can

- share experiences in producing seasonal adjustments;
- give details of interesting problems and possible solutions;
- discuss best practices in seasonal adjustment and time series modeling;
- share lessons learned, tips, and shortcuts;
- present applied research in seasonal adjustment practice.

Modeled after the successful Federal Forecasters Conference, this workshop will provide an opportunity for those who work with official statistics and seasonal adjustment to present interesting issues, problems and applied research to a knowledgeable audience. There will be a plenary session in the morning with four speakers and a discussant, followed by lunch on your own and contributed sessions in the afternoon.

The organizers are soliciting abstracts for presentations of interest to practitioners of seasonal adjustment. Abstracts should be less than 100 words in length, for a presentation of about 15-20 minutes. Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- seasonal adjustment methodology (model-based seasonal adjustment, high frequency data, etc.);
- issues in seasonal adjustment production (residual seasonality, revisions policy, etc.);
- calendar effect estimation and adjustments (trading and working day, moving holidays);
- seasonal adjustment software;
- seasonal adjustment diagnostics.

Please note, papers may cover any subject relating to seasonal adjustment methodology or the process of seasonally adjusting series at a statistical agency. Please send your abstract of 100 or fewer words to: esmd.seasonal.workshop@census.gov by August 15, 2016.

Even if you do not plan to present a paper, please register for the conference and join the conversation at this history-making event. The SAPW is organized by the U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics and is sponsored by the American Statistical Association's Government Statistics Section and the Washington Statistical Society.

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.

Program

MS & PhD

Change of Program, Dual
Degree, & Readmission

Certificate

Non-Candidate for Degree

Application Deadline

January 1 for study beginning the following fall term

January 1 for study beginning the following fall term

April 1 for study beginning the following summer term

July 1 for study beginning the following fall term

One month prior to the first day of classes 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.

JPSM SHORT COURSES

Introduction to Survey Sampling

DECEMBER 6-7, 2016

Summit, Washington, DC

Presented by Colm O'Muirheartaigh and James M. Lepkowski

Reduced Rate Deadline September 30, 2016

Payment and Registration Due November 22, 2016

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=120616

Writing Questions for Surveys

JANUARY 30-31, 2017

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by Nora Cate Schaeffer

Payment and Registration Due January 16, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=013017

Issues in Data Science: Unpacking 'Big Data'

FEBRUARY 7, 2017 (1-Day Course)

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by Cliff Lampe

Payment and Registration Due January 24, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=020717

Practical Tools for Designing and Weighting Survey Samples

FEBRUARY 21-22, 2017

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by Richard L. Valliant and Jill A. Dever

Payment and Registration Due February 7, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=022117

Leveraging New Technologies for Understanding Attitudes and Behavior

MARCH 8-9, 2017

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by Michael W. Link

Payment and Registration Due February 22, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=030817

Introduction to the Federal Statistical System

MARCH 29, 2017 (1-Day Course)

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by Brian A. Harris-Kojetin and Hermann Habermann

Payment and Registration Due March 15, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=032917

Nonprobability Survey Samples

APRIL 14, 2017 (1-Day Course)

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by Courtney Kennedy

Payment and Registration Due March 31, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=041417

Introduction to Survey Estimation

MAY 1-2, 2017

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC

Presented by David Morganstein and Sunghee Lee

Payment and Registration Due April 17, 2017

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=050117

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FROM THE WSS NEWS EDITOR

Items for publication in the **October, 2016** issue of WSS NEWS will be accepted thru the **20th** of **preceding month**.

Email items to 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.

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