WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

IN THIS ISSUE

A Message from the WSS President
Mark Otto

Did you miss Courtney Kennedy's (Pew Research) humor at the beginning of her part of the <u>Morris Hansen Lecture</u>, or our own Methodology Program Chair, Yan Li (UMD) who followed? I missed having the reception but was glad we had the lecture—we missed last year's. Earlier in the month, I learned about <u>causal inference</u> from a lecture by Kathi Irvine (USGS). Yan Li and Jeff Gonzalez have been bringing many interesting seminars our way and there are more to come. If you missed them, we have been posting them on our <u>WSS YouTube channel</u>.

It's almost spring and WSS usually becomes more social, the president's lecture, and the annual dinner. We will have Qing Pan (George Washington Univerisity) is our 2022 Cox Award winner and will give the Cox Lecture sponsored by RTI and WSS in late June. We are looking to have the annual dinner in person if the rising Covid rates in China and Europe including with the BA.2 strain stay put. We'll keep you posted.

The Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) are in Washington DC this August, so we are the local hosts. If you are interested to join in that effort, see Maura Bardos and Leanna Moron's note, in the "want ads" in this newsletter. We are looking for volunteers to assist meeting attendees to find places to eat and the "not so usual" places to go. We may also host another of 2019 president, Tom Krenzke's "Get WSS together." It would be a social outside the meeting, so members not attending JSM could join along with any JSM out-of-town guests. Come join the party along with our lively *tres amigos*.

The "three amigos": Tom Krenzke, John Abowd, & Ed Mulrow (2019)

From the outside, WSS looks pretty quiet, but if you volunteer, things are anything but. The mentoring committee led by Benmei Liu (NIH) matched 34 pairs, many taking multiple mentees when we didn't close the website and had a last-minute mentee rush. Science fair judging has begun headed by Jiashen You (EEOC) and Liz Petraglia (Westat). Jianshen and Liz are overseeing the judging of five regional fairs. Finally, 20 brave souls are listening and discussing aspects of leadership through the WSS Leadership Lunch Series that Eileen O'Brien and I have organized. Sally Morton (ASU) spoke on Organizational and Business Acumen and Gary Sullivan

(Espirer Consulting) on Communication & Trust: Foundations for Sustainable Leadership. We have four more speakers scheduled and hope to encourage peer groups that will continue on past the series. The talks have been recorded, so we might use them in other group discussions. Who knows, maybe this will become another mentoring activity.

There are two other things of note in the newsletter. The first is the election slate. We have an exciting group of candidates. We have pictures this year, proving we have real, live statisticians and data scientists stepping up for the chance to lead WSS. In many volunteer organizations, it is common to have just one candidate per position found and the "winners" are given life terms. The WSS has awesome candidates and competitive elections. In voting, you have a voice in choosing the direction you want our chapter to go. Also, think about yourself as a candidate for one of those positions in a future election. Second, no rush. You can start out a little slower and smaller. Check out our want ads and see if any other chapter activities or roles interest you. They are the primary way the WSS builds community. They are also a way for you to connect, learn, and grow. I hope to see you at a WSS event, yes online, but not too far down the road, hopefully, we'll meet in person!

Best wishes,

Mark

2022 Washington Statistical Society (WSS) Election Announcement

In accordance with the bylaws, please see the slate of nominees for the upcoming 2022 election of WSS Board members. The election will open for voting in early May for approximately three weeks. The nominees for each position are listed in alphabetical order. Candidates other than those proposed by the Nominating and Election Committee—Mark Otto (President), Erin Tanenbaum (President Elect), and Jill Dever (Past President)—may be nominated by petition of at least 2 percent of the members (at least 15 signatures), and must be submitted at least two weeks prior to when the election begins. Petitioned names should be submitted to the **Past President, Jill Dever at jdever@rti.org**.

PRESIDENT-ELECT (Elect 1)

JEFFREY GONZALEZ (Economic Research Service)

Jeffrey Gonzalez is currently serving as the Methodology Section Program Chair for the Washington Statistical Society and has been actively involved in the American Statistical Society for the past decade having previously served as Program Chairs for both the Survey Research Methods Section and the Government Statistics Section as well as the Council of Sections Representative for the Survey Research Methods Section.

If elected to this office, Jeff would build off the initiatives of past presidents with the goal of broadening the WSS' outreach efforts and making events more attractive to a wider range and more diverse group of statisticians, coming from all fields of study and areas of application. Given the unique challenges that the past two years have presented all of us he would aim to engage all members and potential members by making resources, seminars, short courses, and other events accessible.

Jeff has over 15 years of service in the Federal Statistical System and is currently a Research Mathematical Statistician at the Economic Research Service and is currently leading the survey and data development efforts for the Second National Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (FoodAPS-2). Prior to joining ERS, Jeff was a

mathematical statistician at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics where he worked on various aspects of the statistical and survey methodology for its national surveys on employee compensation and working conditions and conducted research for the redesign efforts for the Consumer Expenditure Survey. Jeff received his PhD in Survey Methodology from the Joint Program in Survey Methodology at the University of Maryland.

MICHAEL JADOO (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

I currently serve as an Economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics under the Office of Productivity and Technology Division of Major Sector Productivity. I have been in this position for 8 years producing the Total Factor Productivity (TFP) and its related estimates. During this time, I was an adjunct professor at Montgomery College. There I taught classes on the fundamentals of data analysis to the general public for 3 years. In each course, I taught the subject of data analysis using Python and R statistical programming language. I also included a lecture on how Federal Statistical Agencies produce data for public use and their different data extraction tools. I have earned a Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Arts (Economics)from Florida International University. I also have a Master's degree in Applied Economics from Johns Hopkins University.
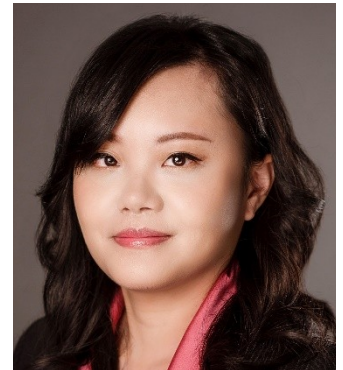
I have been a long-time member of the Washington Statistical Society. I served on the Methodology Program committee on the subject of economics. I am currently the diversity committee chairperson where I have hosted events at different universities in the Washington, DC student groups encouraging students to join WSS. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been promoting WSS membership to professionals at several data science-related meetups, virtually. I have also held events where I talked about the history of the WSS to groups. During the past year, I organized a WSS economic event related to Inflation presented by Jeff Hill of the BLS. Currently, I am one of the WSS representatives at large.
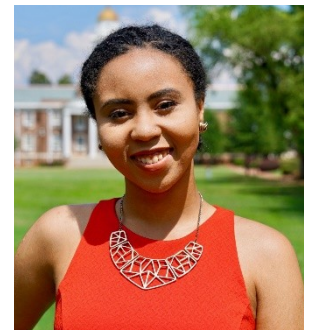
TREASURER (Elect 1)

AMY LIN (Westat)

Amy (Tien-Huan) Lin is a Senior Statistician at Westat and has been there over 10 years working on sampling, weighting, and other tasks across a variety of surveys including health, education, transportation, expenditure behavior, and crime. In addition to her regular work as a statistician, she enjoys coordinating professional development events in statistical learning techniques for the statistics group and experimenting with different tree algorithm software for survey nonresponse research. Amy's research interests include nonresponse modeling, machine learning methods, and sample design. She received a M.S. in Survey Methodology from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor in 2008. She looks forward in bringing statisticians together and promoting statistics to the general public and younger generations through WSS.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

ERIN MURPHY (RTI International)

Erin Murphy joined RTI International's Division for Statistical and Data Sciences in 2021 after earning a Master of Science in Measurement, Statistics, and Evaluation from the University of Maryland, College Park. At RTI, Erin provides data processing, sampling, and analysis support for various projects. Through her graduate work, she has received training in theories and methods of culturally-responsive evaluation, quasi-experimental design, complex survey analysis, and psychometrics. Erin has been a member of the Washington Statistical Society since 2018 and holds memberships with the American Evaluation Association and the American Public Health Association. If elected as the WSS Communications Chair, Erin would focus on the recruitment of members from traditionally under-represented groups in statistics via collaborations and workshops with local universities. Additionally, she would aim to expand the WSS social media presence and establish consistent branding for WSS across its social media accounts.

METHODOLOGY PROGRAM CHAIR-ELECT (Elect 1)

QING PAN (George Washington University)

Prof. Pan's research focuses on novel statistical methods or algorithms to solve challenging statistical problems arising in actual biomedical studies and legal cases. On the biostatistics side, she has made substantial contributions to the development of statistical methods dealing with data with selection bias, informative missing or censoring as well as correlated longitudinal and survival processes, interval censored screening data, gene networks based on similarity and connectivity in electronic health records or laboratory data. On the legal statistics side, Prof. Pan develops procedures for detecting discrimination in data arising in jury discrimination and equal employment cases and estimating the monetary award prevailing plaintiffs should receive in promotion discrimination cases.

In sum, Prof. Pan has authored or co-authored 55 peer-reviewed publications in statistical methodology and applications in medicine and law, with over 1400 citations. Her methodological research has been published in high-impact statistical journals, e.g. Biometrics, Annals of Applied Statistics, Briefings in Bioinformatics, and Statistics in Medicine, Journal of Data Science, Scandinavian Journal of Statistics, and Canadian Journal of Statistics. Her work in the use of statistical evidence in legal cases has appeared in the main journals in that area: Jurimetrics Law (American Bar Association), Law, Probability & Risk (Oxford University Press), Statistics & Public Policy (ASA).

MATT WILLIAMS (RTI International)

Matt is a senior research statistician with RTI International where he collaborates on both methodological research for and practical implementation of a variety of statistical topics: complex survey sample design and analysis, time-series and time-to-event data, combining multiple data sources, disclosure avoidance/privacy, optimization, Bayesian modeling and computation, and evaluation and evidence building. Matt's favorite WSS sponsored events are the Morris Hansen lectures and the Government Advances in Statistical Programming (GASP) workshops. Matt believes that the best events are inclusive of people and ideas, provide

opportunities to share challenges and successes, and support the growth of communities.
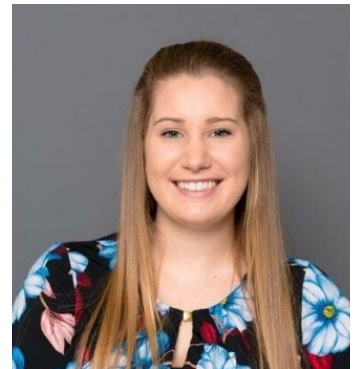

REPRESENTATIVE-AT-LARGE (Elect 2)

REBEKAH COLONNESE (RTI International)

Rebekah Colonnese is an early career statistician in RTI International's Washington, DC Office. She has a bachelor's degree in both statistics and economics and graduated with her master's degree in statistics from North Carolina State University in 2020.

Since joining RTI in June of 2021, she has provided statistical support in the form of data management, programming for sample selection, weighting, analysis, and reporting using SAS and R. While in school, Rebekah completed two internships. As a technology intern for Fidelity Investments, she used Tableau to document client facing dashboards and created a proof of concept for a prospective client. Additionally, she used R to analyze client survey data and presented results to supervisors. As a technology and operations services intern for US Bank, she used PowerDesigner to develop/reverse engineer physical data models. She also worked as a quantitative analyst for the NC State baseball team for 3.5 years while in college.

Please consider electing Rebekah Colonnese as a WSS representative at large.

LLOYD HICKS (Westat)

Lloyd Hicks is a senior statistician with more than 25 years of experience in the design and application of survey sampling. He has worked on a wide range of survey research tasks, including sample design, sampling frame development, sample selection, computation of survey weights, computation of composite weights, imputation of missing data, and variance estimation. He currently serves as a statistical team director for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) program and is responsible for designing and supervising the selection and weighting of school and student samples for biennial national-

level NAEP assessment cycles.

Lloyd started his career as a mathematical statistician at the US Census Bureau primarily working on demographic surveys including CPS and NHIS. In 1996, he moved over to the private sector joining PriceWaterhouseCoopers as a statistical consultant primarily doing audit sampling work. In 1999, he joined Westat where he continues to work today. Lloyd has a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Randolph-Macon College and a master's degree in statistical computing from American University.

Lloyd has been an active member of WSS throughout his professional career. Currently, he is working with the WSS communications committee to evaluate options for modernizing the WSS website. In 2017 and 2018, he served on the WSS mentorship committee. Lloyd is eager to continue his involvement with WSS by serving as Representative-at-Large if given the opportunity.

BEV PRATT (Bureau of the Census)

Bev Pratt began her Federal statistical system career as a U.S. Census Bureau summer intern while a sociology PhD student at the University of Maryland. Sometime later, having conducted her dissertation's field work, Bev returned to the Census Bureau's Demographic Directorate's race and ethnicity area. While there, she co-authored the 2015 National Content Test Race and Ethnicity Analysis Report and created an interactive infographic describing the history of race and ethnicity on the decennial census, now updated as the U.S. Decennial Census Measurement of Race and Ethnicity Across the Decades: 1790-2020.

Bev then detailed at the U.S. Office of Management and Budget where she served as a demographic-characteristics advisor to the Chief Statistician of the United States, with a primary focus on race and ethnicity measures. She has since returned to the Census Bureau as a Race and Ethnicity Research and Outreach demographic statistician with a particular focus on 2020 Census results and related activities.

Bev received her PhD in sociology from the University of Maryland, with a MA in sociology from the University of Maryland and a MS and a BA in sociology from Texas A&M University.

Bev is grateful to work in the Federal statistical community alongside civil servant

colleagues who are rigorously committed to maintaining the integrity of Federal data.

Most importantly, Bev lives in Washington, DC's Columbia Heights neighborhood with her beautiful dog Bill.

SABRINA ZHANG (Westat)

Sabrina Zhang works as a survey statistician at the statistics and data science department at Westat. At Westat, she works on sampling, weighting, data linkage, disclosure analysis, and other topics across education, health, transportation surveys and so on. She has a master's degree in statistics from The George Washington University, and a bachelor's degree in applied statistics from The Capital University of Economics and Business. She is currently pursuing her PhD degree at JPSM, University of Maryland. Sabrina has been a member for both ASA and WSS for several years. She has attended several statistical conferences such as JSM, AAPOR, and volunteered at the events she attended, such as introduced the statistical history posters organized by the Statistics Education Committee at JSM, as well as helped to organize and recruit students to participate for the annual data visualization poster competition in the DC area. She has also helped organize statistical conferences such as collecting attendees' information, responding to questions, generating logistical details for the conference, etc. Sabrina is passionate about joining different ASA, WSS, and APPOR events and tries to help on those events in different aspects, and she hope to continue contributing through different WSS events as much as she can.

2022 Cox Award Winner

RTI and the WSS are pleased to announce that the 2022 Cox Award Winner is Dr. Qing Pan. She is a professor at the Department of Statistics and the Biostatistics Center at The George Washington University. Dr. Pan conducts applied and methodological research motivated by real-world problems, particularly in biostatistics. She is a co-investigator on both the Diabetes Prevention Project (DPP) study and the Statistical and Data Management Center (SDMC) for the Antibacterial Resistance Leadership Group (ARLG). She has developed statistical methodologies for selection bias, correlated longitudinal and survival processes, interval censored screening data, diagnostic studies, and gene networks based on similarity and connectivity. She develops procedures for detecting discrimination in jury selection, equal employment cases, and the monetary award for prevailing plaintiffs. She is a devoted mentor to students and junior faculty.

She will be giving the Cox Lecture in the last part of June. She just learned she had become the Cox Award winner, so we will announce the topic of her talk soon. We offer her hearty congratulations.

Congratulations, Xiang Li, the WSS Student Travel Award Winner!

Every year, the WSS is offering one student travel award to a student attending a statistics or related disciplines program at a school local to the DC-MD-VA-area. As part of the application, students submit an essay describing their interest in statistics, including projects, internships and/or assistantships, and other activities to help improve the field of statistics, such as teaching, mentoring, advising, collaborating, and service, and interest in attending and presenting at an American Statistical Association (ASA) meeting or conference. The award includes $800 plus early-bird student conference registration to one ASA meeting or conference during the year of the award and a one-year student membership to the WSS.

This year, Xiang's application was among a number of strong applications and it was a close decision. Her work on standardizing continuous and categorical covariates in penalized regressions was submitted for publication to a peer-reviewed journal, and she will present it at the 2022 ASA's Joint Statistical Meeting and the 2022 ASA's Biopharmaceutical section regulatory-industry statistics workshop. Xiang developed an R package on classifications in high-dimensional data settings, and conducted research as a member of collaborative epidemiology project and during her internships with a government agency and a banking company. She has been serving the Statistics Department at GWU as the chair of the PhD student committee and the organizer of many events, such as the annual PhD application workshop, and is the recipient of the 2021 Scheuren Prize for service and leadership.

All of WSS congratulate Xiang Li on her hard work and dedication to the profession. We look forward to meeting her at future professional events and to reading her essay about her experience at the meeting/conference supported by the WSS student travel award to be published in the **WSS 2023 Fall Newsletter**.

Stay tuned for the 2023 WSS student travel award announcement to be published on the WSS webpage in the fall of 2022!

Congratulations to the 2022 winner, best wishes in the academic endeavors to the 2022 applicants, and good luck to the future applicants!

Andreea L. Erciulescu, PhD

Senior Statistician, Westat

Representative-at-large and Student Travel Award Committee Chair, ASA Washington Statistical Society

Program chair-elect, ASA Survey Research Methods Section

Story of a Virtual Conference

As a woman working in statistics and data science, the 2021 virtual Women in Statistics and Data Science (WSDS) Conference was a perfect opportunity to present and discuss my research. My work titled "Characterization and estimation of high dimensional sparse Gaussian regression parameters under closed polyhedral cone constraints" was selected for a contributed on-demand presentation, which was prerecorded and uploaded on the virtual WSDS platform for on-demand viewing. The conference allowed me to have insightful and constructive discussions about my research and gain fresh perspectives.

Attending a virtual conference was a completely new experience for me. What I particularly enjoyed about the virtual conference was the perpetual accessibility of this massive content on statistics for months and years to come. At WSDS 2021, I also had the opportunity to attend several exciting talks and get acquainted with active research areas. It was exhilarating to attend the talks of leading female researchers. WSDS is a celebration of women working in statistics and data science and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Finally, I would like to thank the Washington Statistical Society for funding the expense of attending the conference. Also, many thanks should go to my Ph.D. advisor Professor Anindya Roy for his full support and advice.

Neha Agarwala
PhD student
Statistics
University of Maryland Baltimore County

WSS Volunteer Opportunities

Newsletter Editor Assistants Collects, edits, and publishes the newsletter four times a year. Colleen Choi (WSS editor) and Ashley Amaya (Communications Committee Chair)

Electronic Distribution Mass emails event announcements and other information to the WSS membership. Vince Massimini ("eMailman") and Ashley Amaya (Communications Committee Chair)

Workshop Committee Solicits, organizes, and supports WSS in-person and virtual workshops. Send out WSS thank you mugs. Jeff Gonzalez (Methodology Section Chair) and Yan Li (Methodology Program Chair)

Student Representative The most creative WSS position. Hosts events with the social committee for students possibly to mingle with more experienced members. Publishes articles in the newsletter of interest to students. Liaisons with the area student chapters. Mark Otto (Old-guy rep) and Ashley Amaya (Communications Committee Chair)

Website Committee to create content, publish events, update web pages, and keep the WashStat.Org up-to-date and interesting, Lloyd Hicks (Webpage Committee) and Ashley Amaya (Communications Committee Chair)

Social Committee organizes in-person and virtual events. This year we are local hosts to the August Joint Statistical Meetings, be sort of the concierge to meeting participants in making materials to find restaurants, interesting places, and maybe host a WSS reception of WSS members and other attendees.   Maura Bardos and Leanna Moron (Social Committee Co-Chairs)

Historian Keeps track of relevant WSS documents and materials (including Edwards Demings' last slide rule). WSS Handbook link. Updates the history narrative (washstat.org/history.html).   John Czajka (Owner of the unofficial WSS garage)

Other Committees Look on the WashStat.Org board page and see what looks interesting: Quantitative Literacy, Statistics Education, Mentoring, Diversity, Membership, Awards. If you can't find something contact Mark Otto (Every-Committee Member) and Erin Tanenbaum (President-Elect) and WSS Committee head hunters (If you don't come to us, we will come for you.)

Tom Jabine's Passing

Tom Jabine was a force in the Washington Statistical community. He worked at the Census and the National Academy of Sciences.   He died on January 30. Here is his obituary. To get a better idea of his life work and personality, here are his encyclopedia.com entry and an interview for doing the puzzles in Chance magazine for more than a decade. He also worked on statistics for human rights issues. Rest in peace Tom.