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WSS NEWS

October 1995

Fifth Annual Morris Hansen Lecture

WSS is pleased to announce that the fifth annual series of lectures to honor the memory of Morris Hansen has been set for Wednesday, October 25, 1995 at 3:30 p.m. in the Jefferson Auditorium of the Department of Agriculture, South Building. The speaker will be Ivan Fellegi, Statistics Canada. A reception will be held following the lecture.

The lecture series was established in 1990 by a financial grant from Westat, Inc., to honor Morris Hansen, who made significant contributions to survey sampling and statistical methods during his long and distinguished career at the Census Bureau and at Westat, Inc. Further details can be found on page 4.

"Walking in a Winter Wonderland"

Winter may seem distant now, but mark your calendars! The WSS Holiday Party will be held Wednesday, December 13, 1995, 5:30-8:00 p.m., at the Bombay Palace in northwest DC. Join friends and colleagues in this festive gathering. A flyer containing more information about the Holiday Party will appear in the November and December newsletters.

WSS Seminars		
<i>(All events are open to any interested persons)</i>		
October		
11	Wed.	The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) Redesign
24	Tues.	Development of a Remote Access Database System for the Release of Information Based on Confidential Data
25	Wed.	Criteria for Accessing Statistical Systems (Fifth Annual Morris Hansen Lecture)
27	Fri.	Design and Analysis of Community-Based Studies: A Biostatistics Problem with Implications for Other Fields

Announcements

Census Alumni Reunion Schedule

The Census Alumni Association (CAA), established in 1991, will hold a reunion at Census Bureau Headquarters in Suitland, Maryland on October 13, 1995. The Association is open to former employees and currently has some 350 members who pay \$7 annual membership dues. They receive three newsletters per year and can attend a biennial reunion.

CAA President Jack Keane will serve as master of ceremonies for the formal program, which will be held in the Convention Center auditorium, and will introduce the current director, Dr. Martha Farnsworth Riche. It is expected that she will hold a dedication ceremony, assigning names of distinguished alumni to the Census Bureau's conference center, auditorium, and conference rooms.

In addition, Joseph Waksberg, a Census alumnus, who joined the Bureau in 1940 and retiring in 1973 as Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology, to become a senior Vice President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Westat Corporation of Rockville, will relate his experiences over the span of his Census career.

Following the formal program, plans call for a reception and refreshments when alumni can visit with friends and former fellow workers.

New Approaches to Defining Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Areas

COPAFS will host a conference on New Approaches to Defining Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Areas on November 29-30, 1995. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is considering new ways of defining metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. This conference will provide a forum for evaluating alternative definition approaches and for OMB to hear concerns of the user community. Subjects to be covered include:

- * What are the basic geographic units for defining areas?
- * What criteria should be used to aggregate the basic geographic units?
- * Should there be hierarchies of statistical areas?
- * What kinds of areas should receive official recognition to meet the needs of various users?
- * Should the defined areas provide nationwide territorial coverage?

The cost for the two-day seminar, which will take place at the Bethesda, MD, Holiday Inn, will be \$125.00 per person. Registration will be limited to 250 participants. For further information, contact Edward Spar or Susan Cohen in the COPAFS office, voice: (703) 836-0404; fax: (703) 684-2037.

SIGSTAT Meetings

SIGSTAT, the special interest group in statistics for the Capital PC User Group and Washington Operations Research and Management Science Council, will have its October meeting on the 11th from 12:30 to 1:30 in Waugh Auditorium, 1301 New York Ave, NW. The topic is The Internet for Statisticians, an update on what's happened since last year's meeting on the same topic. In particular, we'll be looking at the latest stat software available on the web, on-line stat journals, technical paper repositories and sites for government statistics. Various online search methods will be used to track down information. If you plan to attend, please contact Charlie Hallahan at hallahan.ers or call 219-1291 and leave your name.

Note from the WSS NEWS Editors

Items for publication in the December 1995 WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than October 31, 1995. Fax items to Mike Feil at (301) 443-4045 or e-mail items to mfeil@helix.nih.gov.

Program Abstracts

Topic: The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) Redesign

Speakers: Bruce M. Taylor, Bureau of Justice Statistics, David L. Hubble, Bureau of the Census

Chair: Sandra A. West, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Date/Time: Wednesday, October 11, 1995, 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Location: BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC (Red Line -- Union Station).

Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street. Non BLS employees, please call Pam Douglas at (202) 606-7375 to add name to visitors' list.

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Abstract: The NCVS has been extensively revised after a multi-year effort to evaluate the victimization characteristics it measured and methods used to collect survey data. The impetus for this project came from a number of sources, beginning with an evaluation of the survey by the National Academy of Sciences in the mid-1970's. This presentation will revisit some of the issues that led BJS to redesign the survey and will attempt to evaluate how well the revised survey addresses these problems, which include completeness and accuracy of victimization measurement, response error, and reporting artifacts. This presentation will also outline new options for the study of victimization that the revised survey makes possible.

In addition, the presentation will describe the components of the package of NCVS redesign methods and the methodology of phasing in the redesigned methods to meet the goal of allowing the continuation of the NCVS time series including the ability to produce annual change estimates.

Topic: Development of a Remote Access Database System for the Release of Information Based on Confidential Data

Speaker: Sallie A. McNulty

Chair: James E. Gentle, George Mason University

Date/Time: Tuesday, October 24, 1995, 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Location: BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC (Red Line-- Union Station).

Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street.

Abstract: Data are collected and released by private businesses and government agencies for the purpose of statistical analysis. Data are frequently collected with the assurance that data, on the micro level, will be kept confidential. If any information about specific entities, e.g., individuals or businesses, can be obtained by users from the released information, disclosure occurs. This research is on the development of a remote access prototype database system that would release useful analytical results based on sensitive data while maintaining the confidentiality of the respondents. The database system combines computer science data access controls with statistical disclosure limiting techniques. This amalgamation of computer technology with statistical methodologies should provide confidentiality protection of the data while enhancing the quantity and quality of the released results.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Fifth Annual Morris Hansen Lecture

- Topic:** Criteria for Accessing Statistical Systems
- Speaker:** Dr. Ivan Fellegi
Chief Statistician of Canada
Statistics Canada
- Chair:** Dr. Margaret Martin
- Discussants:** Kathy Wallman, Chief Statistician
U. S. Office of Management and Budget
- Dr. Janet Norwood
Urban Institute
- Dr. James Bonnen
Michigan State University
- Co-Sponsor:** National Agricultural Statistics Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture
- Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 25, 1995, 3:30 pm (Note special time)
- Location:** Jefferson Auditorium, South USDA Building, 14th Street and Independence, NW, Washington, DC (Blue/Orange Line -- Smithsonian, Independence Avenue Exit)
- Reception:** Following the lecture (nominally 5:30 to 6:30 pm)
- Abstract:** The objective of national statistical systems is to provide relevant, comprehensive, accurate and objective (politically untainted) statistical information. The end purposes to be supported by the information are multiple, but include prominently the monitoring of the evolution of the country's economic and social conditions, the planning and evaluation of government and private sector programs and investments, policy debates and advocacy, and the creation and maintenance of an informed public.
- The presentation will discuss ten broad criteria for the assessment of national statistical systems. The criteria are: (1) The broad framework, including the legal one as well as the rank and standing of a chief statistician; (2) Professional core values; (3) Non-political objectivity and the means used to assure this; (4) Systems and approaches used to assess and meet federal priorities; (5) Systems and approaches used to assess and meet state (provincial) priorities; (6) Systems and approaches to assess and meet other user's priorities; (7) Mechanisms for the coordination of the statistical system; (8) Balancing priorities against available resources; (9) Serving the needs of different client groups; and (10) Generating a supportive environment.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

First in Series on Non-traditional Applications of Biostatistical Methods

- Topic:** Design and Analysis of Community-Based Studies: A Biostatistics Problem with Implications for Other Fields
- Speaker:** Laurel A. Beckett, Ph.D.
Rush University and
Rush Institute on Aging, Chicago
- Chair:** Julia L. Bienias, Sc.D., Bureau of the Census
- Discussant:** Van Parsons, Ph.D., National Center for Health Statistics
- Date/Time:** October 27, 1995, 12:30-2:00 p.m. (note that this is Friday)
- Location:** BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC (Red Line -- Union Station). Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street.
- Sponsors:** Methodology Section & Public Health and Biostatistics Section
- Abstract:** Population-based studies of chronic diseases are increasingly designed to meet several research goals simultaneously, in order to make the most efficient use of research funding. These competing goals impose very different design requirements. The statistician must develop a single sampling strategy that yields adequate precision for descriptive studies, balanced samples for comparative studies, and adequate numbers of prevalent and incident cases for prospective studies. The resulting sampling designs are complicated and often present even greater challenges at the time of analysis. I will describe the sampling designs and analytic challenges in two community-based studies of Alzheimer's disease and some of their results. Population-based studies of many other national issues, including unemployment, teen-aged pregnancy, high school dropouts, and small business development, may face many of the same challenges in trying to carry out multi-purpose research.

Announcements Cont'd

Census Bureau's 1996 Annual Research Conference Theme: Survey of Methodologies for the 21st Century CALL FOR PAPERS

The Bureau of the Census is planning its 1996 Annual Research Conference and CASIC Technologies Interchange to be held in March 1996 in the Washington, DC area. The conference will consist of a mixture of invited and contributed papers, most of which receive formal discussion at the conference. A proceedings volume containing all papers and discussions will be published. Papers must be original and not previously published or disseminated. The focus of ARC 1996 will be on methodologies and technologies for improving surveys and censuses.

To obtain registration information or to be included on the mailing list, contact Maxine Anderson-Brown, Conference Coordinator, Office of the Director, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233; Phone: (301) 457-2308; Fax: (301) 457-3682.

Annual Spring Meeting: Biometric Society Eastern North American Region CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The Eastern North American Region (ENAR) of the International Biometric Society is holding their annual spring meeting on March 17-20, 1996, in Richmond, Virginia at the Omni Hotel. The meeting is sponsored by ENAR, several sections of the ASA, and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics. There will be many invited and contributed paper sessions representing a cross-section of interests. Invited sessions that are planned (and their organizers) include: Vaccine Clinical Trials (Halloran), Analysis of Surrogate Markers (DeMets), Analysis of Recurrent Events (Lagakos), Combining Info from Different Sources (Greenhouse), Applications of Markov Chain Monte Carlo (Carlin), Health Survey

Research Methods (Mathiowetz), Statistical Genetics (Roeder), Causal Inference (Liang), Veterans and Agent Orange: Statistical Review in a Political Whirlwind (Stoto), Health Services Research (Gatsonis), Statistical Issues in Medical Imaging (Eddy), Morphometrics (Russek-Cohen), Spatial Statistics (Gregoire), Bioequivalence in sustained release products (Nevius/Condon), Statistical Applications in Basic Medical Science (Heitjan), Ecological Applications of Generalized Linear Models and Quasi-Likelihood Methods (Patil) and a session featuring the new Journal of Agricultural, Biological and Environmental Statistics (Johnson). Several of the organizers are WSS members, and Richmond is so close by. We hope you will attend.

Abstract for contributed papers are due December 1st. Members of ENAR will receive abstract forms in the mail. Others may contact the ENAR office at 11250 Roger Bacon Dr., Suite 8, Reston, VA 22090.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Probability & Statistics Day at The George Washington University

This year's Mid-Atlantic Probability and Statistics Day will be held Saturday, 21 October at the George Washington University in Washington DC. This informal meeting provides an opportunity for professionals in academia, government and industry to meet and discuss common interests. Graduate students are encouraged to come and participate. (The \$5 registration fee will be waived for graduate students.)

There will be two invited one hour talks and contributed paper sessions.

For more information contact: Reza Modarres, Department of Statistics, The George Washington University, 2201 G St., NW, Washington, DC 20052 voice: (202) 994-6359; e-mail: Reza@gwuvvm.gwu.edu.

Announcements Cont'd

Estimating Individualized Absolute Risk of Breast Cancer

Mitchell Gail, National Cancer Institute President of ASA will speak on discuss his recent work with Jacques Benichrer and Cecilia Byrne on estimating individualized absolute risk of breast cancer at George Washington University, Fungler Hall, Room 221, October 27, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. The results are from a two-stage case-control study. Methodological issues will be featured.

Joint Program on Survey Methodology Course Offerings

The following courses are offered by the Joint Program on Survey Methodology.

Visualizing Data: The New Frontier of Data Analysis will be presented on October 16-17, 1995 with a cost of \$285 for nonstudents and \$135 for students. The instructor will be William Cleveland of AT&T Bell Laboratories and the location is The Residence Inn by Marriott in Bethesda, Maryland. The registration deadline for this course is October 2, 1995.

Two decades of research in statistical graphics, and the revolution in computer graphics, have combined to produce a new frontier of data analysis. This course will present visualization tools that provide deep insight into the structure of data.

Statistical Disclosure and Disclosure Limitation will be offered on November 6-7, 1995 with a cost of \$350 for nonstudents and \$200 for students. The instructor will be Lawrence H. Cox and the location is The Residence Inn by Marriott in Bethesda, Maryland.

The registration deadline for this course is October 23, 1995.

This course will cover background and reasons for confidentiality protection; legal and administrative approaches to the problem; survey methods for quantifying disclosure and limiting disclosure in tabulations, microdata and public use statistical data bases; and, experience with the use of statistical disclosure methods and their effects on the quality and completeness of released data products.

To request a registration form, or to be added to the JPSM mailing list call 800-937-9320 or send e-mail to jpsm@umich.edu.

JumpStart in S-PLUS

Statistical Sciences, Inc. will be offering an intensive, one-day course in S-PLUS in Bethesda, MD on October 30. Registration is \$50.

The course is for statisticians and data analysts who are not S-PLUS users, but want a detailed understanding of the benefits of S-PLUS.

The course is structured as the steps in analyzing a dataset: reading data, creating and interacting with graphs, subsetting, restructuring S-PLUS objects, formulating statistical models and assessing results. Customizing S-PLUS functions is emphasized throughout the course.

Please call Doug McClintic at 1-800-569-0123 for details.

Correction: the Kullback Conference

The telephone number for obtaining informaton on the Kullback Conference to be held at the George Washington University on May 24-25, 1996 was listed incorrectly in last month's newsletter. It is 202-994-6356.

Announcements Cont'd

SUDAAN Course Offering

SUDAAN is software specifically designed for analysis of clustered data arising in applications such as complex sample surveys, randomized experiments, and epidemiologic studies.

The 3-day SUDAAN Basics Course introduces SUDAAN to new users and allows experienced users to get face-to-face help directly from SUDAAN's designers. Each course is taught by at least two qualified instructors who, as statisticians, use SUDAAN for analysis of clustered data on a regular basis. Small class sizes (2 students assigned to each computer) allow one-on-one consultation and time for hands-on exercises. This course will prepare students for running SUDAAN on every operating system in which SUDAAN is available (PC, DEC, SUN, and IBM-mainframe).

The SUDAAN Basics Course will be offered in Washington, DC on October 18-20 and Research Triangle Park, NC on November 15-17.

Information on local transportation will be provided with registration packets. The Washington, DC, site is in College Park, MD. The Research Triangle site is near the Raleigh-Durham airport.

The statistical theory for parameter and variance estimation used in the SUDAAN software package is presented, as well as detailed instructions for data input and data analysis. The course covers the major SUDAAN programming statements and procedures, including the CROSSTAB, DESCRIPT, RATIO, and RECORDS procedures for descriptive statistics and the REGRESS, LOGISTIC, MULTILOG, and SURVIVAL procedures for regression analysis. Each lecture is accompanied by extensive hands-on lab exercises and a discussion of results. Applications of SUDAAN are also demonstrated. SUDAAN applications are demonstrated e.g., for cluster correlated and repeated measures data from

epidemiology, clinical trials, and toxicology experiments.

Each attendee receives a) the 75-page technical report "Statistical Methods and Mathematical Algorithms Used in SUDAAN," b) a 300-page volume of class notes, c) a volume of classroom hands-on exercises (with diskette containing data sets and results), and d) a series of short handouts on selected topics (e.g. references for further reading). SUDAAN manuals are included with software, and are available separately for \$50.

The cost for the course is \$850. There is an optional additional \$50 for the SUDAAN User's Manual. The student rate is \$650. Payment may be made by check, credit card, or purchase order. RTI is a nonprofit research organization, and these fees recover the costs of the course and the course materials.

For more information about SUDAAN and "SUDAAN Basics" training, contact Research Triangle Institute, Statistical Software Center, 3040 Cornwallis Road, P.O. Box 12194, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194; e-mail: sudaan@rti.org; Voice: (919) 541-6602; fax: (919) 541-6178.

Additional details about SUDAAN can be found on RTI's WWW home page, under "What's New", at the URL <http://www.rti.org>.

A Reminder to Schedule Seminars into the WSS Calendar

Please remember to call the local arrangements chair to schedule a date on the WSS Calendar prior to finalizing the date and time with your speaker.

This helps to avoid scheduling two seminars on the same day. Please call Robie Sangster (BLS) 202-606-7517, FAX 202-606-7426 or e-mail sangster_r@bls.gov to schedule WSS seminars.

Employment Column

As a service to local statisticians, *WSS News* provides notification of employment opportunities and description of those seeking employment here in the Washington, DC, area. Readers are encouraged to take advantage of this feature of the newsletter. The deadline for inserting notices is five (5) weeks before the publication date. Those interested should write or call: Bill Arends, USDA-NASS, Room 5801 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-2000, e-mail: warends@ag.gov, Voice: (202) 720-6812, Fax: (202) 690-1311.

Director of Research Services Unit

The Department of Epidemiology and Preventative Medicine within the University of Maryland School of Medicine is seeking a research faculty member with excellent management skills to direct its Research Services Unit. This individual will administer all aspects of the Unit's activities, which include providing other University faculty with support in the areas of research design, data collection, data management, and data analysis. The research director will also be responsible for the Unit's fiscal operations and organizational structure. Opportunities to develop independent research may be available.

A doctoral degree in Epidemiology, Public Health, Sociology, Statistics or a related field of study is required plus expertise in the areas of survey research, study design, and program management, including personnel recruitment and training. Experience with sponsored funding pre and post award activities is required including proposal development, contract negotiation, project monitoring, and implementation. Experience with the federal funding proposal process is desired. Strong oral, written, and interpersonal skills required.

Submit a curriculum vitae and three professional references to Ms. Wendy Cohan, Suite 109 Howard Hall, 660 W. Redwood St., Baltimore, MD 21201. This position will be filled upon identification of a

qualified candidate. Rank and salary are commensurate with experience.

Survey Sampling Statistician

National Analysts, a growing marketing research and consulting firm, is seeking experienced candidates for its Survey Sampling Department. Position provides a unique opportunity to explore a variety of complex statistical design issues and to develop and apply leading-edge research techniques.

Principal departmental activities include: developing sampling frames, designing sampling plans, selecting samples, reviewing data collection materials and procedures, providing appropriate weights for respondents, specifying point and variance estimation formulas, and writing thorough documentation of methodology employed. Candidates must have strong statistical training (at least a Master's degree required), computer skills, and excellent oral and written communication skills. A minimum of four years prior experience in survey sampling is required. Commercial experience and a background in sampling of business establishments are preferred but not required. Salary depends on experience.

Send vita and salary requirements to Dr. Carl Finkbeiner, Vice President, National Analysts, Inc., 1700 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19103.

Statisticians

ASG Inc., a contract consulting and permanent placement firm, is looking for statisticians. These positions would be located in the greater Maryland and D.C. areas. Candidates would be working with clinical data. All candidates must have a M.S. or Ph.D. degree in statistics.

Interested candidates should contact: Mike Baker, Atlantic Search Group, Inc., 1100 Summer St., 2nd Floor, Stamford, CT 06905. Phone: 203-356-9540. Fax: 203-967-8644.

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