

WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

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A MESSAGE FROM THE WSS PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Welcome to another year of WSS! I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the Board and so many volunteers to ensure that we continue to provide a broad range of opportunities to both members and nonmembers in 2014-15. WSS sponsors and co-sponsors seminars, short courses, poster competitions, student and teacher learning and mentoring opportunities, and social activities--and we take time to reflect on and acknowledge the accomplishments of our colleagues through multiple award programs.

My hope is that this year we not only will continue to provide outstanding professional growth and networking opportunities but that we will also grow our visibility and membership among both professionals and students in statistics-related fields. We are well-positioned to achieve these goals with strong leadership in place. To name a few: Mike Fleming and Donsig Jang (Methodology Section and Program chairs) will identify and develop outstanding seminars—several are advertised in this newsletter. Dhuly Chowdury will continue to work with a host of dedicated volunteers to provide great opportunities to students and teachers through our Quantitative Literacy program. Carol Blumberg will lead a new Statistics Education committee that will provide seminars to WSS members and teachers in high school and colleges. Yang Cheng will work with members to develop and publicize in-depth short courses on subjects of interest. Shelly Craig, a new WSS member, has agreed to lead the social committee (if you're interested in this committee and an experienced WSS member, please let me know).

Our communications team will get the word out--Tom Mule from the Census Bureau will lead our efforts, working closely with Tim Allen (student representative and WSS webmaster), Vince Massimini (email/listserv coordinator), and Colleen Choi (newsletter editor) to be sure our activities are described in multiple media. Thanks to all who have contributed to WSS News in the past—we hope you will continue to do so this year and also include pictures and anecdotes about event to share with others. Also, if you haven't already done so, please join Meetup—it's free and a great way to keep track of what's happening (www.meetup.com/washstat1)!

WSS offers additional leadership opportunities. The organization is run solely by volunteers. While some program committees are already active, others are looking for champions or supporters to develop and deliver relevant seminars, courses, or social activities. The wide range program committees are described in the WSS handbook (<http://www.washstat.org/index.html>). Examples include data collection, social and demographic statistics, statistical computing, and public policy. Please contact the relevant program chair or me if you'd like to volunteer!

Finally, please feel free to contact me (by email: Dherz@mathematica-mpr.com, by phone: 202-250-3529) if you have any questions about membership or participation in WSS. Here's to a great year!

Sincerely,



Diane Herz

WSS President, 2014-15

SEMINARS

Title: Determining Optimal Recall Period Assignment in Consumer Payment Surveys

Dates/Time: September 4, 2014
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

Speaker: Marcin Hitczenko, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Chair: Yulei He

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center

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.

Abstract: Surveys in many academic fields ask respondents to recall the number of events that occurred over a specific period of time with the goal of learning about the frequency of these events. Research has shown that the choice of the recall period, particularly the length, affects the results by influencing the cognitive recall process. We study this relationship in the context of consumer payments; specifically for the frequency of use of the four most popular payment instruments (cash, credit card, debit card, check).

Our analysis is based on combining recall data, in which individuals rely only on memory to report the number of payments made for recall periods of various length, with data from the 2012 Diary of Consumer Payment Choice, in which individuals track payment behavior in a diary over three-day periods. Each source of data is used to generate, and then compare, inferences about population means. Overall, our analysis suggests that day-based recall is inefficient, with mean-squared differences of mean estimates minimized for longer recall periods. The data also suggest that the optimal recall period choice differs with payment instruments.

In addition, for cash, we develop a model relating recall to individual frequency of use in order to study the relationship between demographic variables and accuracy at different recall lengths. We find little link between demographic characteristics and accuracy of different recall periods for an individual.

We discuss the implications of our findings for the construction of future consumer surveys.

POC e-mail: Marcin.Hitczenko@bos.frb.org

WebEx event address for attendees:

<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=m7392c0e312e54821f0691a86ae5b462b>

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

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

Title: **The Rake's Progress Revisited!**

Dates/Time: **September 24, 2014**
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

Speaker: Nada Ganesh and Fritz Scheuren, NORC

Discussant: Phil Kott, RTI

Chair: Mike Fleming

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center

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.

Abstract: Some old algorithms/approaches never quite outlive their usefulness. And Raking Ratio Estimation or simple "Raking" may be one of them. This is so, despite the explosion in new computational methods.

The justly famous 1940 paper by Deming and Stephan is our starting point. In our talk we will do a little theory, connecting raking to the right theoretical background (As many have pointed out, Deming and Stephan got that part wrong).

We will keep our applications within the general post-stratification framework that motivated the original paper. Anyway, building on the appropriate theory we, then, look at several variations of standard practice and talk about how, when properly modified, the basic raking approach still works well and how some of its well-known pitfalls, (e.g., weight attenuation) can be avoided.

The problem we will discuss at most length is a Big Data application when the data are brought together employing record linkage techniques.

POC e-mail: scheuren@aol.com

WebEx event address for attendees:

<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=m358c27ad1fa5e0b8ab9b275f9e26b741>

For audio:

Call-in toll-free number (Verizon): 1-866-747-9048 (US)

Call-in number (Verizon): 1-517-233-2139

(US) Attendee access code: 938 454 2

Note:

Particular computer configurations might not be compatible with WebEx.

Title: **Detecting Seasonality in Seasonally Adjusted Time Series**

Dates/Time: **September 26, 2014**
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Speaker: David F. Findley, U.S. Census Bureau

Author(s): David F. Findley and Demetra P. Lytras, U.S. Census Bureau

Discussant: Agustin Maravall, Bank of Spain

Chair: Richard Tiller, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center
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.

Abstract: The most fundamental seasonal adjustment deficiency is detectable seasonality after adjustment. This occurs when the pattern of seasonal movements is changing over time and the seasonal adjustment method, perhaps due to the options chosen or, with SEATS, the ARIMA model chosen, cannot adequately track the changing pattern over the data interval specified for adjustment. Residual seasonality is weaker and more difficult to detect than seasonality in the unadjusted series. Using deliberately too rigidly adjusted 16-year-long historical monthly U.S. Census Bureau Service Sector series, we investigated the detection properties of five diagnostics when applied to the last 8, 10 and 12 year spans of the adjusted series and the irregulars. The five diagnostics are the quasi- χ^2 QS statistic for detecting positive seasonal autocorrelation and the "Tukey"-spectrum-based quasi-F test for detecting seasonal peaks of Maravall (2012), the GLS-based stable seasonal regression F-statistic of Lytras, Feldpausch and Bell (2007), and the periodogram and autoregressive spectrum diagnostics. The four most successful diagnostics are in current or forthcoming versions of TRAMO-SEATS and X-13ARIMA-SEATS.

POC e-mail: evans.thomas@bls.gov

- Title:** **Costs vs Benefits: The 2014 Content Review of the American Community Survey**
- Date/Time:** **September 30, 2014**
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm
- Speakers:** Gary Chappell and Karen King, US Census Bureau
- Chair:** Jennifer Park
- Sponsor:** Methodology Section and Public Policy
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center
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.
- Abstract:** The American Community Survey (ACS) is the largest survey in the Nation, annually collecting demographic, social, and economic statistics for small areas and small populations, and providing 1-, 3-, and 5-year data products for virtually every community across the country. In an effort to ensure the least burden on the public at the greatest benefit, the Census Bureau conducted in 2014 a content review of all 72 household and person-based questions on the survey. This discussion will present the results of that review, including the methodological approach used and decision criteria employed. Lastly, we will present the results of the analysis, including any questions recommended as candidates for removal, and next steps in the process to finalize any survey changes.
- POC e-mail:** gary.b.chappell@census.gov
- WebEx event address; for attendees:**
<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.phpMTID=m8471cb3f1a1484e83eec265bdOf6a8c4>
- For audio:** Call-in toll-free number (Verizon): 1-866-747-9048 (US)
Call-in number (Verizon): 1-517-233-2139
(US) Attendee access code: 938 454 2
- Note:** Particular computer configurations might not be compatible with WebEx.

Title: **Statistics Education as Part of the Common Core: What, Why, and How?**

Date/Time: **October 8, 2014**
3:45 pm – 5:00 pm
informal reception from 3:15 pm – 3:45 pm

Speaker: Douglas Tyson, Central York High School, York, PA

Chair: Elizabeth Johnson, George Mason University

Sponsor: WSS Statistics Education program

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Room 1

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 across from Union Station. Use the Red Line to Union Station. Take the elevator or escalator at the north end of the tracks up to the Mezzanine level. Once you exit the Metrorail portion of the station, go past the ticket machines and down the ramp. The entrance to BLS will be directly across the street.

Parking in the area of BLS is available at Union Station. For parking information see <http://www.unionstationdc.com/parking>. No validation is available from BLS for reduced parking rates.

Abstract: Schools need to teach statistical literacy as a part of a core mission to develop educated and informed citizens. Statistics, as an academic discipline, involves reasoning in the face of uncertainty and understanding random processes. This talk will address the broad questions of what statistics we should teach in secondary schools, why we should teach it, and how we should teach it.

In particular, the Common Core State Standards for Statistics are an attempt to address the need for statistical literacy in our society. This presentation will reveal the statistics and probability content in the Common Core standards and how they answer questions of what, why, and how. Activities that can be used to address the Common Core standards will be demonstrated.

POC e-mail: Carol Joyce Blumberg, cblumberg@gmail.com

Remote Attendance via WebEx:

To start or join the online meeting go to
<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=mf81c6c52fcad06e99e78e381d805d76d>.

Call-in numbers: 866-747-9048 or 517-233-2139
Attendee access code: 938 454 2

For assistance go to <https://dol.webex.com/dol/mc> and on the left navigation bar, click "Support".

To check ahead of time whether you have the appropriate players installed for UCF (Universal Communications Format) rich media files, go to <https://dol.webex.com/dol/systemdiagnosis.php>.

- Title:** **Bayesian Estimation of Trends in Population-Level Health Metrics Using Disparate Data Sources**
- Date/Time:** **November 12, 2014**
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm
- Speaker:** Mariel Finucane, Mathematica Policy Research
- Chair:** Donsig Jang
- Sponsor:** WSS Methodology Section and WSS Public Health and Biostatistics Section
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center #9
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.
- Abstract:** Rational priority setting in global health requires rigorous quantification of worldwide, population-level trends in health status. Because global-level surveys are not available, however, researchers are forced to rely on country-level and local data that are often sparse, fragmentary, or unreliable. We present a Bayesian model that addresses this problem by systematically combining data from disparate sources to make country-level estimates of trends in important health metrics for all nations. The model uses Markov random field methods to allow for nonlinear trends and a hierarchical structure to borrow strength within and across regional country clusters. MCMC sampling facilitates inference in a high-dimensional, constrained parameter space, while providing posterior draws that enable straightforward inference on the wide variety of functionals of interest. Throughout, the Bayesian approach accounts for uncertainty resulting from data missingness, as well as sampling and parameter uncertainty.
- In this talk, I will present results for two example health metrics. First, I will discuss trends in hypertension, a primary risk factor for cardiovascular disease – the leading cause of death worldwide. I will then turn to malnutrition, an important contributor to childhood morbidity and mortality in low-income regions. As all levels of mild, moderate, and severe malnutrition are of clinical and public health importance, I will present an extension of the model that uses a finite normal mixture to estimate the shape of the distributions for markers of

malnutrition. The model incorporates both individual-level data when available, as well as aggregated summary statistics from studies for which individual-level data could not be obtained.

This work addresses three important problems that often arise in the fields of public health surveillance and global health monitoring. First, data are always incomplete. Second, data from different sources are often incomparable. Third, standard techniques fail to provide estimates of the full distributions of health metrics, the tails of which are often of substantive interest.

POC e-mail: mfinucane@mathematica-mpr.com

WebEx event address; for attendees:

<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=mfdc5b6d08d4d1480685f067714db3649>

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

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

CONFERENCES

WSS Conference on Administrative Records for Best Possible Estimates

Date/Time: September 18, 2014
1:00 pm — 4:30 pm

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center

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.

Sponsor: Methodology Section

WebEx event address for attendees:

<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=m8fd58b3edba64f3bfaf63eeb8e63edfe>

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

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

Schedule

Time	Speaker	Point of Contact
1:00	Mike Fleming, WSS	charles.fleming@bhox.com
1:10	Connie Citro, CNSTAT	CCitro@nas.edu
1:35	Phil Kott, RTI	pkott@rti.org
2:00	Graton Gathright, Census	graton.m.gathright@census.gov
2:25	Intermission	
2:45	Shelly Martinez, OMB	rmartinez@omb.eop.gov
3:10	Shawn Bucholtz, HUD	shawn.j.bucholtz@hud.gov
3:35	Amy O'Hara, Census	amy.b.ohara@census.gov
4:00	Questions and Answers	

Abstracts

From Multiple Modes for Survey; to Multiple Data Sources for Estimates: The Role of Administrative Records in Federal Statistics

Users, funders, and providers of federal statistics want estimates that are wider, deeper, quicker, better, cheaper (channeling Tim Holt, former head of the UK Office for National Statistics), to which I would add more relevant and less burdensome. Each of these adjectives poses challenges and opportunities for those who produce statistics. Since World War II, we have relied heavily on the probability sample survey as the best we could do, and that best being very good, indeed, to meet these goals for estimates in many areas, including household income and unemployment, self-reported health status, time use, crime victimization, business activity, commodity flows, consumer and business expenditures, and so on. Faced with secularly declining unit and item response rates and evidence of reporting error, we have responded in many ways, including the use of multiple survey modes, more sophisticated weighting and imputation methods, adaptive design, cognitive testing of survey items, and other means to maintain data quality. For statistics on the business sector, in order to reduce burden and costs, we long ago moved away from relying solely on surveys to produce needed estimates and have made extensive use of administrative records, but, to date, we have not done that for household surveys. I argue that we can and must move from a paradigm of producing the best estimates possible from a survey to that of producing the best possible estimates to meet user needs from multiple data sources. Such sources include administrative records, as well as, increasingly, transaction and Internet-based data. I provide several examples, including household income and household plumbing facilities, to illustrate my thesis. I conclude by suggesting ways to inculcate a culture of federal statistics that focuses on the end result of relevant, timely, accurate, and cost-effective statistics and treats surveys, along with administrative records and other data sources, as means to that end.

~ Constance F. Citro, Director Committee on National Statistics, The National Academies

A Different Paradigm Shift: Combining Administrative Data and Survey Samples for the Intelligent User

In her startling WSS President's Invited Lecture, Connie Citro called for the slow and careful implementation of a paradigm shift in the way government agencies produce federal statistics. She provided a number of reasons for a shift away from a primary reliance on the survey sampling, chief among them were unaddressed measurement error, decreasing response rates, and increasing cost, both financial and psychic (e.g., dealing with irate Congressmen complaining about the burden of government surveys on their constituents).

Measurement error often results from attempting to measure quantities on a survey that the sample respondents cannot adequately provide. This is not a new problem, but a growing one as the demands for more policy-relevant data increase. Still, surveys aimed at collecting specific information are often better suited for providing relevant data than external sources like administrative data.

Measuring and removing the potential biases from increasing nonresponse rates is a concern that, it seems to me, has been adequately addressed in the survey sampling literature, although theory is not always quickly translated into practice. That leaves the cost of sample surveys in an era of tight budgets and increasing demands for data products. By itself, the cost of providing defensible estimates at ever lower levels of aggregation provides reason enough to replace or at least modify the current paradigm.

This talk will review recent literature on combining simple linear models and probability-sampling principles when combining administrative data with survey samples to produce useful estimates at levels of aggregation where using the latter alone would be inadequate. Multiple imputation fails as a method of variance estimation in this context. Jackknife variance estimation can be used in its place, but a jackknife requires the generation of multiple data set—much more than the standard five with multiple imputation.

Since the approach described above depends on a model, statistical tests will be proposed to assess the viability of the model and also to inform users of potential biases in the estimates. There are issues of Type 1 and Type 2 error which often separate survey sampling from the rest of statistics that need to be conveyed to the user as do all the other problems associated with the estimation process. Indeed, that is the paradigm shift I am proposing: government statistical agencies should stop treating most users like they are dumber than dirt and cater more to intelligent users of their statistics.

~ Phillip S. Kott, RTI International

The Role of Linked Administrative Data in the Evaluation and Improvement of the Survey of Income and Program Participation

The Census Bureau uses Federal and State administrative data to evaluate and improve the quality of data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). This talk will describe how the SIPP program uses administrative data to investigate bias from unit and item nonresponse, to validate survey responses, to improve imputation of missing data, and to augment the SIPP data.

I will discuss the challenges that have been faced in accessing, linking, interpreting, and protecting the administrative data; what has been learned about SIPP data quality and what SIPP improvements have been achieved; and the potential new uses of administrative data for SIPP improvement that are currently being investigated.

~ Graton Gathright, Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division; U.S. Census Bureau

One piece of the Multiple Data Sources Paradigm Shift: New Policy on Accessing and Use Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes

In her 2013 WSS President's Invited Lecture, Connie Citro called for implementation of a paradigm shift in the way government agencies produce federal statistics. She discussed a number of challenges to making this shift. This talk describes one set of challenges - those to accessing and successfully using government administrative data in statistical programs—and how 2014 guidance issued by OMB is designed to address those challenges. The talk will also discuss some agency implementation activities to date, and some early lessons learned from those efforts.

~ Shelly Wilkie Martinez, Statistical and Science Policy, Office of Management and Budget

Integrating Administrative Records and Commercial Data Sources into HUD's Housing Surveys: Past, Present, and Future

HUD, in partnership with the Census Bureau, is redesigning the American Housing Survey and the Rental Housing Finance Survey for 2015. A major part of the redesign effort is to maximize the use of administrative records and commercial data.

This talk will: (1) summarize how HUD and Census have used HUD administrative records in prior American Housing Surveys; (2) summarize our current research into administrative records and commercial data for sample frame improvement, imputation, response replacement, and question replacement; and (3) discuss challenges and unresolved issues in integrating administrative records and commercial data into our housing surveys.

~ Shawn Bucholtz, Director, Housing and Demographic Analysis, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Fully Leverage External Data Sources: A Census Bureau Change Principle

The Census Bureau is investigating the strategic reuse of Administrative Records and Third Party Data to improve data quality, reduce costs and respondent burden, and develop new data products. This talk will describe how administrative records are featured in the Census Bureau's Strategic Plan, addressing Connie Citro's call for vision and long-term planning. Efforts to integrate administrative records into frame construction, contact approaches, adaptive design, and imputation are underway for the decennial census and multiple household surveys. This talk discusses progress on these uses, and highlights the need to understand data quality, design data systems to accommodate "big" data, and collaborate with program and statistical agencies.

~ Amy O'Hara, Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications, U.S. Census Bureau

WSS Conference on the Consumer Price Index

Date/Time: **October 28, 2014**
1:00 pm — 4:30 pm

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center

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.

BLS cafeteria is open from 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Union Station has an extensive food court.

Sponsor: Methodology Section

WebEx event address for attendees:

<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=m644630d4bb233074d5e1f2e3f4ce72c4>

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

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

Schedule

Time	Speaker	Point of Contact
1:00	Michael Horrigan	Horrigan.Michael@bls.gov
1:20	Stephen Reed	reed.stephen@bls.gov
2:05	John Greenlees	jlgreenlees@verizon.net
2:40	William Johnson	Johnson.Bill@bls.gov
3:10	Intermission	
3:25	Owen Shoemaker	Shoemaker.Owen@bls.gov
4:00	Ralph Bradley	Bradley.Ralph@bls.gov
4:30	Questions and Answers	

Abstracts

Overview of the Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) seeks to measure the change in the cost of living by measuring the change in prices that consumers pay for a market basket of goods and services. Production of the CPI requires a geographic sample, an outlet sample, and a market basket with appropriate weights. With those in place, procedures for selecting the specific items to be priced, collecting prices, and translating the price data into indexes are required. Issues such as seasonality and missing prices must be addressed, and decisions must be made as to how and what to publish. This talk gives an overview of the CPI, including its measurement objective, the surveys that underpin it, the procedures for collecting and aggregating price data, and finally its publication.

~Stephen B. Reed, Economist, Consumer Price Index Program, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Chained CPI-U: Methods and Issues

The Chained Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers, or C-CPI-U, is the third CPI series produced and reported by the BLS each month (along with the CPI-U and CPI-W). The C-CPI-U was introduced in 2002, in order to provide a closer approximation to the economic concept of a Cost of Living Index, or COLI. For that reason, a number of analysts and advisory panels have proposed that the C-CPI-U replace the CPI-U and CPI-W in federal taxation and benefit programs. This talk describes the unique aspects of the C-CPI-U's construction, and how these have led to differences in the measured rates of consumer price change between the C-CPI-U and the other CPI series. Conceptual and operational issues in the use of the C-CPI-U for indexation will also be discussed.

~John S. Greenlees, Former Associate Commissioner for Prices and Living Conditions, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Surveys of the CPI: How They Fit Together and General Sampling Features

The CPI uses data drawn from many surveys including Commodities and Services, Housing, Consumer Expenditures, and TPOPS. Data from these surveys interact with a representative sample of geographic areas drawn to represent the urban population of the U.S. The sampling procedures for these samples share significant commonalities but each have some distinct features to take into account.

~William Johnson, Chief of Survey Research and Analysis Branch, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Variance Estimation for the CPI-U

In 1998, the CPI Program adopted a Stratified Random Group (SRG) methodology for estimating 1-, 2-, 6- and 12-month variances (and so, standard errors) for every aggregate CPI index that the CPI program produces at and above the basic Index_Area—Item_Stratum level. A Jackknife estimator is used to calculate the variances for the index series which are formed from item groups lower than the Item_Stratum level. All these variances results are produced each month, immediately after CPI's official monthly release. This talk describes the constituent design structures and methodologies of the CPI-U's variance system. Summary and comparative variance results will also be presented and discussed.

~Owen J. Shoemaker, Mathematical Statistician, OPLC: Survey Research and Analysis Branch, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

A Glimpse into the Future CPI

The American economy is changing quickly and this will induce future consumers to behave differently from past consumers. There is increasing reliance on online purchases in place of “bricks and mortar” retailer purchases. The frequency of product changes is becoming increasingly rapid. Many industries such as the airlines, cable companies and health providers are consolidating and in some cases are giving fewer consumer choices. All these changes place new challenges on the current CPI manual sampling program. When products are being replaced at a faster rate, it is increasingly difficult to draw representative samples and to accurately adjust prices for quality change. I discuss these challenges and describe various BLS pilot projects that address these challenges. Several of these projects investigate the use of “big data” supplied from private vendors or from web scraping programs to replace the current manual system. I discuss how we construct price indexes from these new sources. Specifically, I explain how adjustments are made to account for the differences between the vendor's sampling methods and CPI sampling methods, for different geographical coverage between the vendor and the CPI program and for different information that that is collected on product characteristics. Finally, I discuss the opportunities to make better quality adjusted price estimates when products are rapidly changing.

~Ralph Bradley, Division of Price and Number Research, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

CONGRATULATIONS AWARD WINNER!

Kenneth Schoendorf and Gregg Robinson Honored with Mentoring Award

Deborah Griffin, Chair of the 2014 Jeanne E. Griffith Award Selection Committee

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring award recognizes individuals working in federal, state, and local government statistical agencies for their efforts in mentoring junior staff. Kenneth C. Schoendorf, National Center for Health Statistics, and J. Gregory Robinson, U.S. Census Bureau, share the 2014 award. On July 9, the award committee hosted a ceremony and reception to honor the recipients. Ken and Gregg's families, friends, and colleagues joined friends of Jeanne Griffith, the award committee, and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP) at this event. This year's ceremony marked the 12th annual presentation of this award, and the sixth year that the American Statistical Association's Government Statistics Section has managed the award process.

The Award

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring award honors Dr. Griffith who died in 2001, after working for more than 25 years in the federal statistical system. The award acknowledges supervisors, technical directors, and other team members who make unique efforts to mentor and encourage younger staff at all levels to learn, grow, and to recognize and seize career opportunities. The award includes a plaque and a \$1000 honorarium.

The Ceremony

Deborah Griffin, chair of the award committee, led the July 9th ceremony. Debbie introduced John Thompson, director of the U.S. Census Bureau, Charles Rothwell, director of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and Andy Orlin, Jeanne E. Griffith's spouse.

John welcomed the audience of about 70 to the ceremony and introduced the recipients, their sponsors, and past mentoring award winners in attendance. He spoke of the role of the ICSP in supporting this award and praised Gregg Robinson for his work at the Census Bureau. Charles highlighted the importance of mentoring and thanked Ken for his contributions at the NCHS.

Andy reminded the audience of the history of this award. He congratulated the winners and thanked the 2014 award committee which includes Kevin Cecco, Emerson Elliott, Deborah Griffin, Carol House, Lillian Lin, and Anna Nevius for the outstanding job they did this year. In particular, he thanked Emerson for his participation in the award committee for over 10 years. Andy noted that the committee has continued to publicize and spread the word about the award, to keep sponsors funding the effort, and most importantly to select two truly deserving individuals this year to receive the award.

Before presenting the awards, Debbie acknowledged the award's co-sponsors. The Government Statistics Section of ASA, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), Westat, the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS), the American Institutes for Research, the American Educational Research Association, the ICSP, STATA, the Social Statistics Section of ASA, and the Washington Statistical Society currently provide financial support for the award.

The 2014 Recipients

This year the award committee selected two individuals to receive the 2014 award – Kenneth C. Schoendorf and J. Gregory Robinson. Debbie said that the letters nominating Ken and Gregg were compelling with similar stories of an expert in a field that was always willing to share his skills and encourage his colleagues. She commented that she was struck by their common strengths – their advocacy and support of the research that others participate in; their partnerships with junior staff to build their confidence; their ability to help staff learn how to solve complex problems; and their integrity and commitment to public service. Debbie noted that while the committee generally tries to select one individual to receive this award, this year they were happy to honor both of these individuals.

J. Gregory Robinson

J. Gregory Robinson is one of the preeminent demographers in the world and he shares his passion for his work on a daily basis with junior and senior staff. Gregg has a PhD and an M.A. in Demography from the University of Pennsylvania. He has a B.S. in Industrial Management from the University of Tennessee. Since 2002, Gregg has been a Special Assistant for Demographic Analysis at the U.S. Census Bureau.

Victoria Velkoff, chief of the Social, Economic and Housing Statistics Division at the U.S. Census Bureau nominated Gregg for this award. She introduced Gregg to the audience, noting his many contributions to mentoring junior staff. She spoke of his enthusiasm for demography and the exceptional work he continues to do in developing the skills of demographers at the Census Bureau. Debbie presented Gregg with the award, reading the following citation.

"J. Gregory Robinson (Gregg) is an exceptional colleague and mentor. He exemplifies the spirit of this award by the way he develops junior staff and serves as an influential role model to demographers at the U.S. Census Bureau. Gregg's enthusiasm for his work is contagious. He loves the work he does, he makes sure he does the highest quality work possible, and he supports others to excel in their work. As a mentor, he provides advice to staff confronted with complex problems, challenging them to expand their thoughts and consider new directions for research. Gregg treats everyone with respect with a sincere willingness to help others grow. He imparts his personal perspectives of integrity, values, and duty to serve the public through the sound application of demography. The next generation of demographers at the U.S. Census Bureau is stronger because of their interactions with Gregg."

In receiving this award, Gregg thanked his family for their support and acknowledged the mentors in his career, several of whom were in attendance. Gregg spoke of his love of

demography and how much he appreciated the kind words of his colleagues in nominating him for this award.

Kenneth C. Schoendorf

Kenneth C. Schoendorf is chief of the Infant Child and Women's Health Statistics Branch in the Office of Analysis and Epidemiology at the NCHS. After graduating from MIT, Ken attended Tulane University where he received both his Medical Degree and a Masters in Public Health. After medical school, he was a pediatric resident at Boston City Hospital. During residency, he spent a year in Australia working at the Melbourne Children's Hospital, but returned to Boston City to become Chief Resident. In 1990, he joined the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) and came to the NCHS. After EIS, he stayed on at NCHS as a member of the US Public Health Service Corps and soon rose to his current position. In 2001, he was requested to serve on detail to the National Children's Study at the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development to help design the original plans for the study.

Lara Akinbami, a colleague at the NCHS, nominated Ken for this award. In her introduction of Ken, Lara highlighted his humility and the ease with which he provides advice and support to staff at the NCHS. She shared anecdotes that spoke to Ken's sense of humor as well as his commitment to the work of the NCHS. She noted that he is retiring from the NCHS and moving into another phase of his career. Wishing him well, she commented on how much they all will miss him. When Debbie presented Ken with the award, she read the following citation.

"Kenneth C. Schoendorf (Ken) exhibits exceptional qualities of intelligence, humility with humor, and supreme generosity in mentoring staff at the National Center for Health Statistics. Following his example, mentees have come to navigate the data, the concepts, and the path to a public health career. Ken is recognized for being unquestionably approachable and accessible and invariably available to staff. His demonstration of professional behavior and effective leadership make him well deserving of this award. Ken's creation of a supportive and collaborative work environment produces researchers who truly care about the success of the people around them. Ken has not only disseminated top notch epidemiological research, but also disseminated a resource he has seen as even more valuable – the talent, ideas, and energy of his mentees. "

Ken thanked the committee and his colleagues for this award. He respectfully questioned their praise, noting that in reading their letters he believes they have great talent in writing fiction. He spoke highly of the researchers that he works with; speaking of the many things he has learned from them.

In closing, Debbie added her thanks to the co-sponsors for their support of this award. She acknowledged the role of the Government Statistics Section for their general guidance in administration of this award and their identification of new award committee members every year. Next year Brian Harris-Kojetin and Bill Mockovak will join the award committee that Lillian Lin and Carol House will co-chair.

Inviting the audience to the reception, Debbie personally congratulated Ken and Gregg noting that it was very clear that they each exemplify the qualities of Jeanne E. Griffith and the spirit of this award.



From left: Jennifer Parker, Ken Schoendorf, Sarah Schoendorf, Lara Akinbami

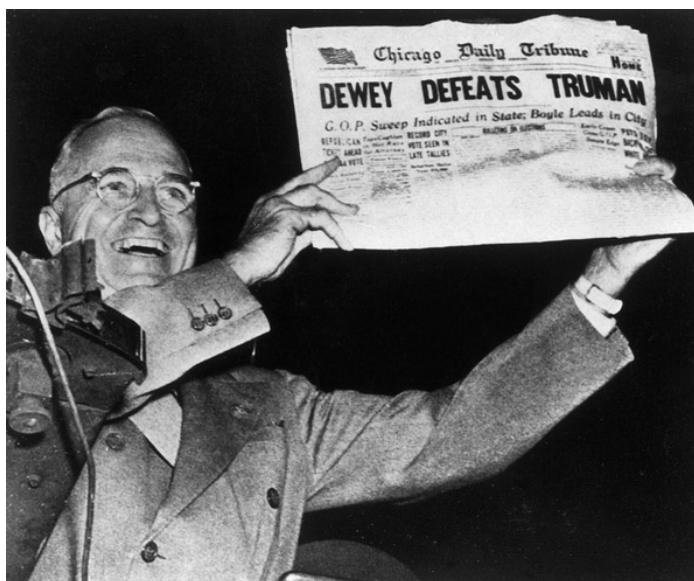


From left: Kelly Robinson, Ali Dane, Gregg Robinson, Scott Robinson, Ben Dane, Pam Robinson, Amy Dane

STUDENT CORNER

“The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated” –Mark Twain

Well, last month, after thanking the Academy and my mother for a wonderful year in what I thought was my last column ever as the WSS student rep, I found out that I had the opportunity of serving for another year. When WSS President **Diane Herz** asked if I would like to stay on, I did not have to think long about saying yes; I love doing this because it lets me write about my two favorite subjects: Statistics and myself.



In addition to giving me an unexpected extension as the Student Rep, the WSS held its elections for several Board positions. The process got me thinking about the famous, “DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN” photo from the 1948 Presidential Election. I’d always thought that photo was funny, but since I started studying Statistics, it occurred to me that some poor Statistician must have looked at that photo as proof that he or she had gotten it horribly wrong. So I did some digging.

It turns out that a Gallup poll conducted using a technique known as *Quota Sampling* influenced the results. I had never heard of quota sampling before I started investigating this. That’s because it’s not much in favor these days. The idea is to try to make a sample reflect the demographics of the population by assigning quotas for demographics groups; e.g. survey ten middle-class democrats from ethnicity A, two rich republicans from ethnicity B, etc. The idea sounds great, but has the flaw that sample selection is left up to human intervention. In the election, the surveyors had unintentionally biased the sample to overestimate the Republican vote.

For more on Quota Sampling and the 1948 Presidential Elections, see Dr. Dennis DeTurck’s page at UPenn: <http://www.math.upenn.edu/~deturck/m170/wk4/lecture/case2.html>

~ Tim Allen, WSS Student Rep (timothyhenallen@gmail.com)

Washington Statistical Society Member Spotlight

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

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

I work at the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics one of the 13 principle Federal Statistical Agencies. I am the Deputy Division Director.

2. What attracted you to your current position?

I have been part of the Federal Statistical System for over 25 years and this position is an opportunity to be part of the leadership team of a Federal Statistical Agency.

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

...to meet people in the field in the area, to stay current on relevant research, and to be part of the WSS community.

4. What was your first job?

My first statistics job was at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder, CO. My first job was a waitress at Country Kitchen in Helena, MT as a teenager.

5. Why did you join the statistics profession?

I love being a statistics professional. In fact, I am an Accredited Professional Statistician. As a statistician, there is always something interesting and challenging to work on. What first drew me to statistics was the idea that I could work in any subject area researching or applying statistics.

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

Of course technical skills are important to statisticians, but being a good communicator and translator are extremely important. Because statisticians work with people in other fields, it is important to be able to translate their technical language into ours to determine the appropriate methods and then back into their language so they can readily understand the statistics.

MEET WSS MEMBER Jeri Mulrow...



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

If I could give my 18-year-old self a piece of advice it would be to continue to have fun in whatever you choose to do. To me, statistics is fun and I pretty much have fun every day.

8. What is your favorite daily ritual?

Every day I walk my dog. It is a great daily ritual that gives me time to think, time to be outdoors, and gets me some exercise.

9. What is the last book you read?

I just read Cloud Atlas by David Mitchell because my son recommended it to me.

10. What is your favorite vacation spot?

I don't have a favorite vacation spot, I just like to travel! Next year, I am going to hike the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu with 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, John Finamore (jfinamore@nsf.gov), member of the WSS Board.

We look forward to hearing from you.

2013-2014 WSS Annual Report

With the help of volunteers and membership support, The Society had another active year. I would like to thank the WSS Board, Committee Chairs, and countless other members who stepped up time and time again during my year as President. Below I touch upon new issues the Board discussed as well as routine activities managed through the year.

During the term, the Board had a healthy discussion about the WSS website. After many years of service to the Society, Dan Jacobs announced in 2013 his desire to step down as Webmaster. We advertised the need for a new volunteer, but found our membership understandably lacking this skill set. The Board debated the possibility of moving to an ASA-managed "microsite". This would move away from an independently maintained website to one constructed and managed by the ASA (but with content-posting abilities made available to some WSS members). Under the helpful guidance of our Communications Office, Phil Kalina, the Board ultimately voted to stay with the current Website. Our Student Representative, Tim Allen, has graciously volunteered to lead a team of volunteers who will take over the Webmaster duties. As the website serves such a critical function to the Society, we are pleased to have found a solution.

Two other issues coming to the attention of the Board dealt with WSS seminars. The first is a continual decline in the number of WSS seminars offered up by the different Program Committees. The second issue is a decrease in the number of people who show up in person to attend seminars. In fact, between June 2013-14, WSS hosted only seven seminars. In the section on *Seminars and Conferences* below, I speak more to this issue.

Below I highlight some of the 2013-14 WSS activities and accomplishments.

Awards

The WSS continued its tradition of honoring those in the statistical profession by sponsoring or co-sponsoring several notable awards.

Three members were bestowed the 2014 WSS President's Award. Awardees are selected by the WSS President with the purpose of recognizing members who go above and beyond to serve the interests and membership of the WSS. The winners were: Frank Yoon, Tim Allen and Dhuly Chowdhury. Frank was recognized for his leadership as the Social Committee Chair over the past two years; Tim for his successful efforts to re-invigorate the WSS student membership; and Dhuly for her work as the Quantitative Literacy Committee Chair to promote and coordinate numerous QL activities throughout the year. It was my great honor to bestow these awards to these members during the WSS Dinner held at Carmine's on June 24, 2014. On the same day as the annual dinner, the 2014 Gertrude M. Cox was awarded to Jerome Reiter of Duke University. This award recognizes mid-career statisticians who have made significant contributions to one or more areas of applied statistics. Dr. Reiter gave a lecture at RTI International titled "Sharing Confidential Data in an Era with No Privacy". The Cox award is sponsored by WSS and RTI International.

The 2014 Julius Shiskin Memorial Award for Economic Statistics was awarded to Julia Lane of American Institutes for Research (AIR) for her contributions to the development of a new

Census Bureau program that has significantly advanced research on employment dynamics. This award is cosponsored by the WSS, the National Association for Business Economics, and the Business and Economic Statistics Section of the ASA. This award recognizes original and important contributions in the development of economic statistics or the use of statistics in interpreting the economy.

The 2014 Roger Herriot Award, co-sponsored by the WSS and ASA's Government and Social Statistics Sections, was awarded to John Abowd (Cornell University), John Haltiwanger (University of Maryland) and Julia Lane (AIR) for work accomplished on the longitudinal employer-household dynamics (LEHD) program. The award recognizes individuals who develop unique and innovative approaches to the solution of statistical problems in federal data collection programs.

After a delay due to the federal government shutdown in October, the 23rd annual Morris Hansen Lecture occurred on January 7, 2014. Stephen Feinberg of Carnegie Mellon University gave the Hansen lecture titled "Envisioning the 2030 U.S. Census". Robert Groves of Georgetown University and Ivan Fellegi, formerly of Statistics Canada, served as discussants. In 2014, the WSS Board again voted to co-sponsor the Jeanne Griffith Mentoring Award. This award recognizes mentoring of younger staff in the Federal Statistical System. The awards were given to J. Gregory Robinson (Census Bureau) and Kenneth C. Schoendorf (NCHS). In May, the Board voted to continue co-sponsoring this award for three years at which time a new vote will be taken.

Finally, in 2014, the Board voted to award the first-ever WSS Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM) Student Travel Award. Zhuang Maio from George Mason University won the award, which pays registration fees and hotel and travel costs (up to \$1,000). Mr. Maio will be attending the JSM to be held in Boston in August. In May, the WSS sponsored three students to attend the Malay Ghosh conference "Frontiers of Hierarchical Modeling in Observational Studies, Complex Surveys and Big Data" held at the University of Maryland.

Seminars and Conferences

In 2013-14 the WSS continued to explore new ways to deliver seminars of interest to our membership. Most seminars are held at the Bureau of Labor Statistics conference center typically in mid-day. However, in recent years the Society has seen a noticeable downward trend in both audience attendance and the number of seminars organized. The Board has discussed several alternatives: starting seminars later in the day, sponsoring more single-topic all or half-day symposiums, and making seminars available remotely via WebEX. This latter technology enables users to remotely view presenter slides from their desktop and hear lectures they occur. Board members Mike Fleming and Dan Liao worked with videoconferencing staff at BLS to successfully leverage this new technology. Moving forward, we hope to balance both remote and in-person attendance to the greatest benefit of both members and those willing to lecture. At the June Board meeting, members voted to establish a new program committee for Statistics Education. The Board is also considering dissolution of other committees that have become inactive.



Mike Brick delivering 2014 President's Lecture

Seminars sponsored by WSS in 2013-14 included committees representing:

- Methodology – 4
- Data Collection Methods – 1
- Biostatistics and Public Health – 2

On March 16, J. Michael Brick from Westat was invited to deliver the 2014 President's Lecture. Mike is a past president of the WSS and also co-editor of a recent AAPOR Task Force Report on Nonprobability Sampling. His lecture was titled "On Making Inferences from Non-Probability Samples". The topic proved very popular with the WSS membership –over 75 attended in person and 52 participated via WebEX.

Once again WSS is partnering with the DC chapter of AAPOR to co-sponsor the AAPOR/Joint Statistical Meeting Review/Preview mini-conference. For the third year in a row, this conference allows local participants to share presentations from AAPOR (held in Anaheim, CA) and JSM conferences (to be held in Boston, MA). This year saw fewer submissions from the JSM, which may be a function of conference timing being earlier this year. The conference will be held at the BLS Conference center on July 22-23.

The Society also co-sponsored the conference "Frontiers of Hierarchical Modeling in Observational Studies, Complex Surveys and Big Data" held at the University of Maryland in May.

Quantitative Literacy

Thanks to the help of many different volunteer members, the WSS participated in a large number of local QL activities. The Curtis Jacob Memorial Award for Outstanding Statistics Project was awarded at the annual dinner to advisors and students representing the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and Takoma Park Middle School. In all, WSS participated in a poster competition involving over 200 posters, 6 regional science fairs, the Curtis Jacob Award Competition, the annual teachers Meeting Within a Meeting, 3 STEM fairs, and the U.S. Science and Engineering Festival. Many thanks to each and every organizer, judge, and presenter who helped make each event a success. In particular, I want to recognize Dhuly Chowdhury, Brian Slobado, Frank Yoon, Mark Otto, Barnali Das, and Carol Blumberg for lending their time and talents to these QL activities.

Short Courses

In October, a short course on R programming language was arranged but had to be cancelled due to the federal government shutdown. The course is being rescheduled for August at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Our chapter also “won” the traveling short course sponsored by the ASA whereby a prestigious instructor is provided at minimal cost. Arrangements are now underway to schedule this short course on Logistic Regression to be taught by Stan Lemeshow.

Social Activities

Our chapter was socially active this year with four events including the annual holiday party (at Agora in DC), the reception following the Hansen lecture (at NASS/USDA), a jointly-sponsored happy hour with the DC chapter of AAPOR during the FedCASCIC conference (at Club 201), and the annual award dinner held at Carmine’s in DC. All events were well attended and we thank Frank Yoon for making them a success. Another joint happy hour with the DC-AAPOR chapter is planned in July around the Review/Preview Conference.

Student Activities

Thanks to our new Student Representative, Tim Allen, the WSS student membership grew tremendously. At the end of the term, WSS had 106 student members, exactly half whom became new members while Tim served his first term. This is no surprise given the extensive outreach conducted by Tim – six WSS presentations at four universities as well participating on a panel at GWU promoting Alternative Career Paths for STEM students.

ASA Fellows Committee

Two new members were appointed to the Fellows Committee (Polly Phipps and Debbie Griffin). During the term, they helped put forward four Fellow nominations, two of which were elected as 2014 ASA Fellows (Nancy Bates and Frauke Kreuter).

Communications Committee

In our second year on Meetup.com, the number of members increased from 40-98. In addition to the WSS website, this social media platform serves an important function in advertising our activities and attracting new WSS members. During the term, Phil Kalina also established a WSS twitter site: <http://twitter.com/washstat>.

Finances

The Society remains in good financial health. We again made a modest profit from the Review/Preview Conference. Because of the short course cancellation, we had no revenue in this area. Major expenditures over the year included costs to support quantitative literacy, Hansen catering, sponsorship of awards, the holiday party, and providing complementary meals for award winners at the annual dinner. At the beginning of my Presidential term, the Society’s balance was \$63,962. At the end of the term, the balance was \$67,523.

Membership

Membership numbers remain healthy. At the end of June 2014, the total membership of WSS was 953. Of these, 76 are associate members putting the number of full WSS members at 877. One year prior, the total number of full WSS members stood at 889 indicating a very slight decrease.

Acknowledgements

In closing, I wish to thank the numerous WSS members who helped me during my tenure (some mentioned in this report, but certainly not all)! I enjoyed much support from Past-President Keith Rust who was always willing to answer my numerous emails about the role of President and inner-workings of WSS. In-coming President, Diane Herz was also extremely helpful providing fresh perspective and ideas on how to make the WSS a continued success going forward. We three jokingly refer to the past, present and incoming Presidents as the “Holy Triumvirate”, but in fact, most decisions do involve all three, making the task of President much more manageable. I also wish to acknowledge our Secretary, Andy Keller, as



his job is perhaps the second- most demanding on the Board. Finally, thanks to Colleen Choi and Vince Massimini for faithfully editing and publishing the WSS newsletters and maintaining the WSS listserve – both are vital links to our membership. Thanks also to Jane Li for her years of service as Treasurer of WSS.

I look forward to my transition to past-President and my third and final term on the WSS Board. My primary task will be determining the 2015-16 slate of WSS Board officer nominations. If you are interested in running, or wish to learn more about a particular office, please contact me at nancy.a.bates@census.gov.

~Nancy Bates
President 2013-2014

SHORT COURSES

Balancing Data Confidentiality and Data Quality

SEPTEMBER 10-11, 2014

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Lawrence H. Cox

Registration and Payment Due by August 27, 2014

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=091014

Bayesian Inference for Surveys

SEPTEMBER 25-26, 2014

Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC 20212

Presented by Roderick Little and Trivellore E. Raghunathan

Registration and Payment Due by September 11, 2014

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=092514

Presentation of Economic Data

OCTOBER 16, 2014

College Park Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Hyattsville, MD 20783

Presented by Deborah P. Klein and Michael D. Levi

Registration and Payment Due by October 2, 2014

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=101614

Quality Adjustment Methods for Price Indexes

NOVEMBER 6-7, 2014

College Park Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Hyattsville, MD 20783

Presented by John S. Greenlees

Registration and Payment Due by October 23, 2014

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=110614

Introduction to Survey Sampling

DECEMBER 2-3, 2014

College Park Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Hyattsville, MD 20783

Presented by Colm O'Muircheartaigh and James M. Lepkowski

Registration and Payment Due by November 18, 2014

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=120214

Issues in Data Science: Unpacking "Big Data"

JANUARY 22-23, 2015

College Park Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Hyattsville, MD 20783

Presented by Cliff Lampe

Registration and Payment Due by January 8, 2015

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=012215

Leveraging Mobile & Social Technologies for Data Collection**FEBRUARY 10-11, 2015****Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC 20212**

Presented by Michael W. Link

Registration and Payment Due by January 27, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=021015**Introduction to the Federal Statistical System****FEBRUARY 25, 2015****Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Washington DC 20212**

Presented by Brian A. Harris-Kojetin and Hermann Habermann

Registration and Payment Due by February 11, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=022515**Writing Questions for Surveys****MARCH 12-13, 2015**

Presented by Nora Cate Schaeffer

Registration and Payment Due by February 26, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=031215**Practical Tools for Sampling and Weighting Survey Samples****MARCH 30-31, 2015**

Presented by Richard L. Valliant and Jill A. Dever

Registration and Payment Due by March 16, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=033015**Total Survey Error****MAY 4-5, 2015**

Presented by Paul P. Biemer and Lars Lyberg

Registration and Payment Due by April 20, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=050415**Introduction to Survey Estimation****MAY 28-29, 2015**

Presented by David Morganstein and Sunghee Lee

Registration and Payment Due by May 14, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=052815**Practical Tools for Nonresponse Bias Studies****SEPTEMBER 18, 2015**

Presented by Jill Montaquila and Kristen Olson

Registration and Payment Due by September 4, 2015https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=091815

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunity for Senior Faculty Position at McDonough School of Business- Georgetown University

Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business invites applications for a senior faculty position in Business Statistics, within the Operations and Information Management (OPIM) Area. We seek to make an appointment at the Associate or Full Professor level. Pending budget approval, the appointment would begin at the start of the fall semester 2015. Candidates should hold a Ph.D. in Statistics or a closely related field. We are seeking candidates with a distinguished record of research and teaching excellence in the business statistics area. Candidates with interests related to the statistical components of business analytics are particularly encouraged to apply.

ABOUT THE MCDONOUGH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Located in Washington, D.C., Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business offers unparalleled access to the world's business, policy, and thought leaders. The school, which attracts faculty and students from around the world, is committed to developing principled leaders capable of making complex business decisions in a global environment and who are dedicated to serving both business and society. Georgetown McDonough offers undergraduate, MBA, Executive MBA, and specialized programs. The school's programs are consistently highly ranked, and the OPIM Area is actively involved in all these programs.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested applicants who wish to submit a complete application should send a cover letter, curriculum vitae, published and working papers, research and teaching statements, as well as the names and contact information for three references to: opimfacrecr-stats@georgetown.edu The reference letters may be included with the application or sent separately, also to opimfacrecr-stats@georgetown.edu. The application deadline for submitting all application materials is September 30th 2014 or until the position is filled.

Georgetown University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer fully dedicated to achieving a diverse faculty and staff. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply and will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability or other categories protected by law.



Fors Marsh Group LLC (FMG) is an applied research consulting firm based in Northern Virginia. Our primary mission is to leverage insights from the social sciences for improved organizational decision-making.

FMG is seeking an experienced and motivated Survey Statistician to work as part of a survey research team. This individual's primary responsibility will be to provide statistical and methodological expertise for large-scale surveys designed and executed specifically for our clients.

Responsibilities include:

- Designing and executing sampling and weighting plans for various probability and non-probability survey efforts ranging from large national surveys to smaller survey efforts targeting specific populations.
- Applying sophisticated principles in the fields of survey methodology, sampling, survey statistics, and/or other social science disciplines to design, conduct, and analyze complex national surveys.
- Planning and designing survey administrations to optimize cost, estimate precision, and minimize respondent burden.
- Preparing technical reports, presentations, and executive summaries.
- Advancing the reputation of our organization through participation at professional conferences, publication of research studies, and continued technical training.
- Participating in project meetings and assisting project managers with development of research projects.

Qualifications:

- Knowledge and experience with sampling, weighting, non-response analysis/adjustments, imputation, and assessing/minimizing survey bias, variance and error.
- Graduate degree in survey research, statistics, mathematics, social sciences or a related field with emphasis on Survey Methodology.
- Ability to work effectively as a team leader, team member, or independently.
- Experience with statistical software packages (e.g., SPSS/Stata) and Microsoft Office computer software applications.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Applicants may be subject to a low-level government security investigation and must meet eligibility criteria for access to sensitive information.

We Offer:

- Highly competitive benefit/compensation package
- A highly collegial and intellectually stimulating work environment
- A company culture promoting work/life balance

Interested candidates should apply at:

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FROM THE WSS NEWS EDITOR

Items for publication in the **September, 2014** 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.

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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