

CHAPTER CHATTER

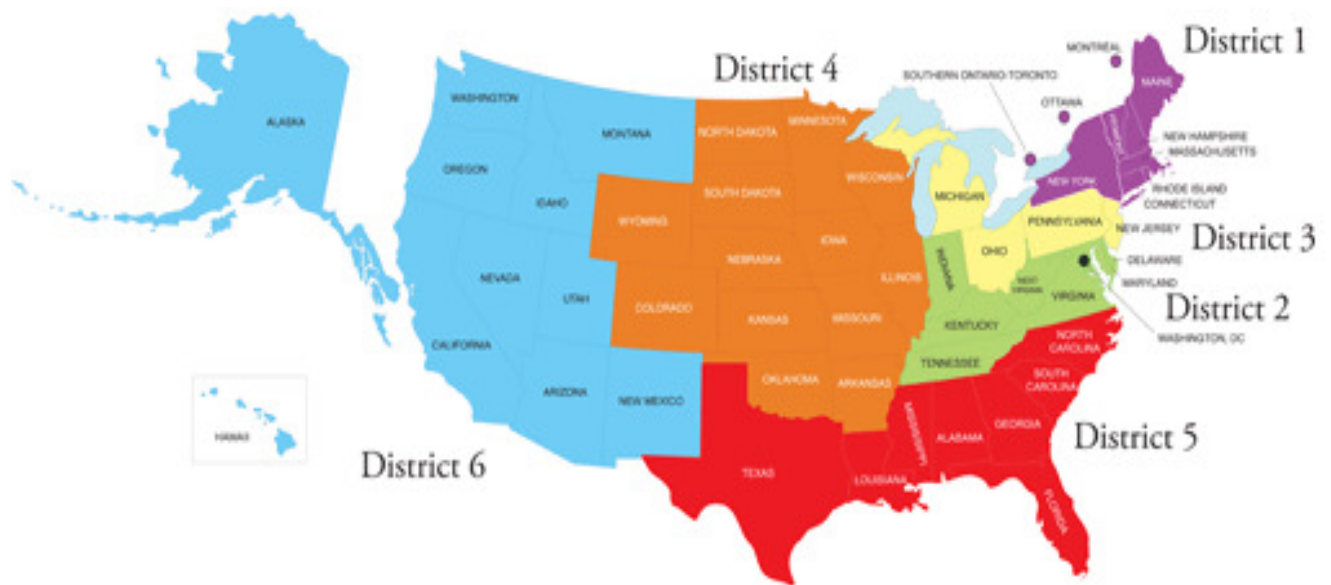
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Anamaria S. Kazanis, Editor

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PUERTO RICO

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A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the winter 2014 issue of *Chapter Chatter*, the newsletter for and about ASA chapters. The COCGB established this publication to foster improved communications i) between the COCGB and chapters, and ii) among chapters by providing a forum for spreading news throughout the statistics community about ASA chapter initiatives and activities.

The winter issue was delayed due to technical difficulties, as communicated this holiday season. Please let us know if there is a continuing communication malfunction within our system (e.g. – your chapter did not receive the call for articles).

The spring 2015 issue is planned to be sent out before the end of the spring semester. Please share articles and plans for the spring and summer, as well as any other item that should be disseminated in the greater ASA chapter community.

I want to draw the community's attention to an opportunity presented by the Marquardt Memorial Industrial Speakers Program. The program's objective is to

familiarize students with the role of statisticians in industry by bringing experienced industrial statisticians to campus to talk to students about their work. Consider hosting a speaker or presenting as part of this program! Contact Greg Piepel, program Chair, at greg.piepel@pnl.gov for further information.

Let me know if you have any suggestions about this newsletter (its content, format, distribution, etc.). I am interested in suggestions on how to facilitate more effective communication between chapters and enable you to use the COCGB as a resource.

Finally, please send me information about guest speakers, short courses and seminars, symposia, and other exciting events that are planned for by your chapter so that I can inform other chapters about your activities through this newsletter.

Enjoy this issue of *Chapter Chatter*.

Anamaria Kazanis
Editor

**ASA IN 2014:
MARKING 175 YEARS & SECURING A PROSPEROUS FUTURE**

Ron Wasserstein, ASA Executive Director

What an exciting year it has been for the American Statistical Association! Celebrating a 175th anniversary is no small thing, so the ASA and its members took the opportunity to celebrate the association's past and energize its future. In this article I present three future-focused projects that emerged as a direct result of the planning activities associated with the anniversary celebration.

This is Statistics

This year, the ASA developed and launched its first-ever public awareness campaign. Called "This is Statistics," the campaign target audience is high-school and college-undergraduate students and its secondary audiences are parents, teachers and counselors—or those people who influence the decisions students make about their area of college study. Its key message to students is to major in statistics because of the high demand for workers with analytical skills. Its secondary message is for students to take statistics courses in college because they will need the data-analysis skills no matter what field they chose to pursue.

The first several months of the year were dedicated to developing the campaign, including its communications centerpiece—the [This is Statistics website](#)—and related promotional materials. The ASA campaign launched late August. In slightly more than four months, the campaign has generated significant interest from its audiences and the media. There have been nearly 14,500 sessions on the website by almost 11,000 unique visitors, with three-quarters of the

total sessions attributed to new visitors. Meanwhile, the campaign's Facebook page has more than 900 likes and its Twitter feed has nearly 850 followers. The ASA's public awareness campaign will continue in 2015 and we'll pass on news about how chapters can be involved then.

The Statistical Education of Teachers (SET)

With statistics taking a more prominent role in the [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)](#), there is increased national attention at the K-12 level and great need for professional development and resources to help teachers teach the increased statistics content. To that end, the ASA and [National Council of Teachers of Mathematics \(NCTM\)](#) released a [statement](#) calling on universities and school administrators across the country to provide high-quality training and professional-development opportunities that will prepare teachers to lead statistics classes.

Also, the ASA convened a group of prominent statistics educators to write the Statistical Education of Teachers (SET) report to provide guidance on preparing pre-service teachers at the elementary, middle, and high-school levels to effectively teach statistics. Teachers at all grade levels must understand and teach the statistical investigative process as outlined in the ASA's [Guidelines for Assessment and Instruction in Statistics Education \(GAISE\) Report: A Pre-K–12 Curriculum Framework](#). Just as the GAISE Report impacted the CCSS and K-12 statistics

education more broadly, we expect the SET report will impact how K-12 teachers are prepared to teach statistics nationally. The report is expected to be released in the spring and will be available on the [ASA website](#).

ASA Development

As the ASA grows and evolves, much like it has over the past 175 years, it is important to consider the means to keep the organization viable. We are building a development program in order to ensure the ASA continues to serve its members and be the collective voice to promote the work statisticians do, educate our communities and colleagues, and build a smarter, stronger future within our profession and beyond.

Beginning next year, you will start to see additional materials from the ASA that communicates more broadly what the ASA does, what benefits exist for members, why it is so important to support the organization financially, and the impact that can be made by doing so. We will be working closely with ASA chapters to find opportunities in local communities and explore ways we can

work together to increase resources for the ASA and strengthen the chapters. We will be creating a program that recognizes our major individual and corporate supporters in a way that is meaningful to them and meets their needs. Be on the lookout for this information in the coming months!

On to 200!

Our debt to those who made possible 175 years of the ASA is to do all that we can to ensure a bright future for the association and the profession. These three activities—and others in which the ASA is engaging or will engage—represent the dedication of the ASA Board and countless other volunteers in committees, chapters, sections, and outreach groups to promote the practice and profession of statistics. Without this extraordinary volunteer commitment, our society would not be thriving. To all who volunteered in the past or are doing so now we say, “Thank you.” To all others, we eagerly invite your participation. Your chapter is a great place to launch an exciting and rewarding career as an ASA volunteer.

SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE: WHAT DOES A HEALTHY CHAPTER LOOK LIKE?

Mary Kwasny



The Council of Chapters has a committee to assess “Chapter Status” a.k.a.

Chapter Health. I have the pleasure of chairing that committee for two years, before passing it on to W.Y Wendy Lou in January 2016. I’m very happy to report that most (over 80%) of the chapters are doing well – their membership numbers are stable, they are involved in at least one or two activities per year, and they let the ASA know who current officers are. However, annual reports often contain comments such as “would like to know how to increase interest” or “we are struggling.”

So, if the Chapter Status committee thinks a chapter is healthy, but the chapter believes they are struggling – what then, exactly, is chapter health? Are we all trying to live up to an image of a “perfect Chapter” – has Chapter Chatter “airbrushed” this image? I hope not. Yes, we are encouraged to share the “good stuff” and are hesitant to share disasters, but I am fairly sure that many chapters have had events where 5 people show up! Activity level varies drastically as well. Some chapters are engaged in one successful activity per year, while there are other very active Chapters – Philadelphia comes to mind - with activities for busy professionals through involvement with AP Statistics. I think, perhaps, it is time to look at the metric that you, as Chapter Officers, can use to assess health. For this, I

encourage you to consider the following single question:

Is your chapter serving its members to the extent that the members want?

That is, if you are not judging science fairs, but there is no need, and no one wants to judge science fairs... that is not indicative of “bad health.” But if there is something that a significant number of members of a chapter want to do - be it a workshop, luncheon, short course, science fair - do you have the resources (from volunteers to finances) to do it? If you don’t know how to do it, the ASA – or other chapters - can help! That is one reason why the Council asks the Chapter Representatives to report on successful events. We want not only to celebrate their efforts, but to learn from each other. I know if my chapter was interested in hosting a joint career day, I would email reps from Buffalo and Southern Ontario-Toronto to see what worked and what didn’t. One of the benefits of our national organization is that we don’t need to re-invent the wheel!

Knowing what the chapter membership wants might be another challenge in and of itself. My chapter has tried to survey our membership, and we get typical lackluster response. One idea is to actually draft a Mission Statement for the Chapter, and have membership vote on it. This may actually help both the board and the membership to come to an agreement as to what constitutes Chapter health and make strides towards it.

The idea of chapter health, to me, is very much like physical health. Some believe that they are not healthy unless than can run a

marathon. I have nothing against those people, but for me – my bar is set just a bit (okay a lot) lower, and I’m completely okay with that.

Happy and *healthy* holidays!

Oh, and – PLEASE don’t forget to complete your Annual Chapter Report in December/January reporting on activities in the calendar year 2014!!

FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Yili Pritchett

The Northeastern Illinois Chapter (NIC) of the ASA is located between the Chicago and the Milwaukee Chapters. While to some not familiar with the area that might seem to be slim pickings for statisticians, in reality the area is home to many types of employers of statisticians and statistical consultants. As such, the Chapter can draw on diverse areas of interest for presentations and workshops. The NIC also reaches out to the next generation by sponsoring a portion of the Illinois State Science Fair for consecutive years.

The NIC has organized workshops over years with the intent to bring in novel yet applicable statistical methods to the community. The Chapter also recognizes that in today’s world the way results are communicated is just as important as the results themselves. Towards this end the

NIC has incorporated topics of “soft skills” training in addition to technical presentations in the contents of workshops. In 2014, the NIC had workshops on Classification and Regression Trees by Prof. Wei-Yin Loh from UW-Madison, Meta-Analysis using R by Prof. Ding-Geng Chen from University of Rochester, and Communication and Presentation Skills That Enable Effective Collaboration by Christy Chuang-Stein from Pfizer.

One thing new in 2014 was that the Chapter has enhanced its collaboration with local companies and obtained sponsorship from AbbVie for the Fall Workshop. This greatly reduced the registration fee and offered free attendance for college and graduate students who are interested in learning and/or considering statistics as a profession.

BAYESIAN NETWORK META-ANALYSIS SEMINAR AND CHAPTER ELECTION TWIN CITIES CHAPTER

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Grant Weller

The Twin Cities Chapter co-hosted a seminar by Professor Brad Carlin, Chair of the University of Minnesota's Division of Biostatistics, held at the University of St. Thomas (UST) in St. Paul on November 14th. The seminar was held jointly with the University of St. Thomas' Applied Probability and Statistics seminar series. After a brief introduction to

Bayesian statistics and Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) sampling, Professor Carlin presented his recent work, "Bayesian network meta-analysis for multiple endpoints." Following the seminar, the Chapter elected two new officers. Professor Arkady Shemyakin of UST was elected President, and Grant Weller of Savvysherpa, Inc. was elected the new Chapter Secretary.

ANNUAL MEETING PRESENTS THEMES INCLUDING: WOMEN IN STATISTICS AND GOVERNMENT CAREERS MONTANA CHAPTER

Laura Hildreth

The Montana Chapter of the American Statistical Association held its annual meeting on September 23, 2014 with about 50 participants. The keynote speaker was Dr. Amanda Golbeck from the University of Montana who has a wide range of research interests from biostatistics to the status of women in statistics. Dr. Golbeck's presentation, *Statistician Elizabeth L Scott and the Status of Academic Women*, highlighted research from her upcoming book *Equivalence: Elizabeth L. Scott at Berkeley* to be published by Chapman and Hall/CRC Press in 2016. In addition to this book, Dr. Golbeck, along with Ingram Olkin and Yulia Gel, is also the editor of the book

Leadership and Women in Statistics which is currently in press by Chapman and Hall/CRC Press. The meeting also featured a panel discussion by Cody Custis, Cynthia Hollimon, Amber Nuxoll, and Sam Schaefer on career options in statistics with a focus on options in government. Two PhD candidates from Montana State University also gave presentations including Patchanok Srisuradetchai (*Robustness to Response Surface Design against Missing Data*) and Michael Lerch (*Equivalence Testing for MCMC Convergence*). The meeting concluded with a business meeting where the officers for 2015 were elected.

COMMITTEES, SEMINARS, & PARTNERSHIPS, OH, MY!

WASHINGTON CHAPTER

Tom Mule

The Washington Statistical Society has had a very busy fall. The chapter created a Statistics Education committee to focus on how statistics is taught at the high school and collegiate level. This committee had its first seminar on October 8th about statistics education as part of the Common Core State Standards. Our chapter has also conducted several seminars. On December 2nd, the Chapter conducted a panel discussion that was very highly attended on “*Curb-stoning, a Too Neglected and Very Embarrassing Survey Problem.*” The panel included Cathy Furlong (Statistics without Borders), Arthur Kennickell (Federal Reserve Board), Jaki McCarthy (NASS), Ali Mushtaq (Consultant), Fritz Scheuren (NORC) and Steve Koczela (MassINC Polling Group). The panel discussed different aspects and implications related to the fabrication of survey data. The WSS also sponsored conferences on administrative records and the Consumer Price Index. By means of WebEx, anyone in the ASA may participate in a WSS seminar.

A highlight of this fall was that the chapter entered into a collaborate partnership with Data Community DC. Data Community DC is an organization that connects and promotes the work of data professionals including statisticians. Our partnership is attempting to see if both groups can benefit from co-sponsoring and collaborating on seminars that may be beneficial to both of our memberships. The chapter came together to celebrate its Holiday party on December 9th at the Brixton in Washington, DC. Looking ahead to next year, the Morris Hansen Lecture will be on January 20th 2016 at the USDA auditorium. Danny Pfeffermann will talk about the “Methodological Issues and Challenges in the Production of Official Statistics” with discussion by Lawrence Brown and John Eltinge. The WSS will also be sponsoring an upcoming conference on establishment surveys in February.

For more information about the Washington Statistical society, check out the following link: <http://www.washstat.org/>



Arthur Kennickell	Federal Reserve Board
Fritz Scheuren	NORC
Jaki McCarthy	National Agricultural Statistics Service
Ali Mushtaq	Consultant
Mike Fleming	WSS Methodology Section

From left to right:
Steve Koczela MassINC Polling Group,
Cathy Furlong Statistics without Borders

FALL SOUTH CAROLINA STATISTICS CONSORTIUM SUCCESS SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Mulugeta Gebregziabher

The SC-ASA Fall South Carolina Statistics Consortium meeting was successfully concluded on Saturday, Nov 15 at the Madren Center in Clemson, SC. The conference featured 8 invited speakers from around the region, as well as 17 student poster presentations. For more information check out the following link:
http://people.clemson.edu/~mcmaha2/FALL_2014_SCSC/index.html.

The turnout from the three SC universities was great with invited speakers from each of the four Statistics/Biostatistics programs at MUSC, USC and Clemson University. Part of the event was student poster presentations

and three outstanding poster awards were given from the total of 17 outstanding posters presentations, demonstrative of the effort our students put to their work. The awards were given to (1) Peije Hou (USC, Mentor: Joshua Tebbs), (2) Zizhen Wu (USC, Mentor: David Hitchcock) and (3) Elizabeth Payne (MUSC, Mentor: Mulugeta Gebregziabher). The spring 2014 meeting of SC-ASA will be held in Columbia, SC and the fall 2015 meeting will be held in Charleston, SC. The organizing committee included Mulugeta Gebregziabher (MUSC), Chris McMahan (Clemson), Alex McLain (USC) and Bethany Wolfe (MUSC).

BUSINESS ANALYTICS: STATISTICS AND BIG DATA SEMINAR PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

Anne Meibohm

On October 24th, the Philadelphia Chapter hosted an excellent seminar by Randy Bartlett, PhD, PStat, on Business Analytics: Statistics and Big Data. Dr. Bartlett, who is a member of the chapter, is the author of the book *A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics* (McGraw-Hill, 2013).

After providing an overview of the Business Analytics Revolution, Randy discussed different strategies and tactics to deal with the high volume of a wide variety of data arriving at high speed that is characteristic of Big Data. He encouraged us as statisticians to provide quantitative leadership and communicate our value proposition. Randy asserted that statistics is still center stage in the realm of data

analysis. Big Data means more statistics, not less, although the IT industry may try to convince people that software will solve everything and allow people to try to do their own analyses. He emphasized the need for companies to have Quant-Led Quant teams. Randy concluded by providing and reviewing a roadmap for organizations to assess their Business Analytics Maturity and to determine paths of growth.

The audience of approximately 40 statisticians from academia, the pharmaceutical industry, medical research, and other fields interacted enthusiastically with Randy through comments and questions. One professor commented that as a result of what he learned he would propose

the inclusion of more statistics courses in his school's Business Analytics related curriculum. Others also had very positive reactions and found the information

presented to be enlightening and thought-provoking.

FURTHERING STATISTICAL LITERACY AT ALL LEVELS: DETROIT CHAPTER

Bern Debacker

The Detroit chapter of ASA has developed a good relationship with the K-12 community from working with DACTM (Detroit Area Council of Teachers of Mathematics). The chapter has a representative (actually a couple) serving on both boards.

Every year there is a special section called DATA CENTRAL at the conference of DACTM and MDSTA (Metro Detroit Science Teachers Association). All the statistics-related presentations, ASA publications, text books, etc. are at this location.

The members of the chapter board have been very generous about volunteering to give presentations at this conference. This year alone one member gave two presentations. One was "Becoming a Statistician: It Begins in High School." The second was "Introduction to Phase 3 Clinical Trials." He has also given the first presentation to high school students at various Detroit area high schools and at 2 magnet schools. One of these talks later resulted in a motivated student doing a Biostatistics Summer Internship at the Karmanos Cancer Institute in Detroit. Every year members of our chapter visit local schools to present the awards for the Poster Contest. The chapter also pairs with the Ann Arbor chapter to judge at the Southeast Michigan Science Fair.

This year the chapter has made available a special award of up to \$500 for a K-12 statistics teacher wanting to do a special project. The grant will be administered through DACTM. Applications will be accepted until Dec. 15, 2015. The award will be made in January 2016.

The next Chapter Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 13, 2015, in Room 200A Elliot Hall on the Oakland University campus.

This is the annual membership meeting, at which new officers will be introduced and the Treasurer's annual report will be given.

Mark Isken will give a presentation entitled "Introducing open source statistical and data science tools to business analytics students and professionals" Refreshments at 6:15 PM, business meeting starts at 6:25.

We plan to "web cast" the proceedings, so you also have the option of attending the meeting in conference room 3E, 1 Ford Place, Detroit MI.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS! KANSAS – W. MISSOURI CHAPTER

Jo Wick



Photo: Ron Wasserstein (left) and Arlin Feyerherm (right) at the Fall Chapter Meeting of the KWM Chapter commemorating the 175th and 50th anniversaries of the ASA and KWM Chapter, respectively.

In 2014, the Kansas-Western Missouri (KWMCH) of the American Statistical Association commemorated its 50th anniversary alongside the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the ASA. The KWM Chapter was founded on the campus of Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, where on December 7, 1962, forty-three founding members adopted the first Chapter constitution. In 2014, nearly 100 members came to the University of Kansas Medical Center to hear Ron Wasserstein, Executive Director of the ASA, speak on “Energizing the Future of the Statistics Profession.” The event marked one of the largest audiences in

Chapter Meeting history. Of note, Arlin Feyerherm is the only Chapter member to boast attendance at both the first Chapter meeting in 1962 and the commemoration of that event 52 years later.

In other events for 2014: April was a busy month for the Chapter. Sudipto Banerjee (Minnesota) presented on complex spatial dependencies at the Spring Chapter Meeting in Manhattan, Kansas, where the Chapter inducted students from Emporia State University, Kansas State University, University of Kansas, University of Kansas Medical Center, Central Missouri State University, Pittsburg State University, University of Missouri-Kansas City, and Washburn University into the national statistics honor society Mu Sigma Rho.

In addition, the 7th annual regional symposium, *Frontiers in Biostatistics*, was co-sponsored by the Chapter, along with Cerner Corporation and the University of Kansas Medical Center Department Of Biostatistics. The 2014 symposium was held in April at the University of Kansas-Edwards Business, Engineering, Science and Technology (BEST) Center in Overland Park, Kansas, with Simon Sheather’s (Texas A&M University) short course in modern regression methods for predictive analytics opening the two-day event. Keynote Scott Berry (Berry Consultants) presented on innovations in trial design to the 60+

students, faculty, and professionals from

academia, industry, and government.

LUNCHEONS, PRESENTATIONS, BOARD MEETINGS & AWARDS CHICAGO CHAPTER

Borko D. Jovanovic

Under the new Chapter President Edward Hirschland, Chicago Chapter has had an active fall.

In addition to five luncheons with presentations and five Board meetings, on October 22nd the Chapter has celebrated the 2014 “Statistician of The Year” Award. This year’s recipient was Dr. Andrew Gelman of

Columbia University, who attended the evening with his wife Caroline, and spoke before a sold out house of over fifty members and guests of the Chicago Chapter.

Other highlights of this fall presentations will be Elias Bruegman of TGG Group, in November and Steven Stigler of University of Chicago, in December.

SECOND ANNUAL AP STATISTICS REVIEW SESSION CLEVELAND CHAPTER

Tom Short

In late April 2014, two weeks before the 2014 Advanced Placement (AP) exam was given, the Cleveland Chapter held its second annual AP Statistics Review Session. The event was held at John Carroll University, and was attended by over 100 students, teachers, mentors, and parents.

Student participants were provided with advice and insights about performing well on the AP Statistics exam, delivered by

presenters with experience as readers and as leaders at the annual AP Statistics reading. Presenters included David Spohn from Hudson High School, Pam Garrett from Kenston High School, John Kern from Duquesne University, and Tom Short from John Carroll.

The Cleveland Chapter hopes to continue to offer this annual event for as long as it is beneficial to students.

THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY SOUTH ONTARIO CHAPTER

Janet McDougall



Meeting of the SORA Executive from left to right Xin Gao (SSC President) Stephen Chamber (SORA Treasurer), Haseong Kim (Student Rep), Janet McDougall (ASA President), Wendy Lou (ASA Past President), Georges Monette (Past President SSC), Eshetu Atenafu (Member at Large SORA), Hugh McCague (Secretary SORA), Yun-Hee Choi (Council of Chapters Rep – ASA)

To the ASA we are the “Southern Ontario and Toronto” Chapter; locally it is called SORA-TABA – SORA being the Southern Ontario Regional Association which includes SSC (Statistical Society of Canada) as well as ASA members. Many of the statisticians are members of both ASA and SSC and since both ASA and SSC have common goals, historically the Chapter

work is done through SORA. TABA is a relatively new addition – The Toronto Area Biostatistics Association - an informal association of applied biostatisticians and pharmaceutical researchers that has been organizing monthly evening seminar-dinners in the Toronto area for over 25 years to provide a venue for statisticians to meet and discuss. So at the organizational level (president, treasurer etc.) there is quite a diverse interest group and each of the three organizations have their representatives when planning a major event such as the annual workshop.

Looking within the ASA Chapter I discovered further diversity. Of the 92 ASA members for Southern Ontario only 53 (57.6%) are Canadian and 47 (51.1%) were from Ontario (the other 6 were from 4 different provinces). Of the “non-Canadians” 34 (37.0%) were Americans – from 20 different states; the other 5.4% were from Iran, Namibia, New Zealand, Sweden and Taiwan. Since Southern Ontario is the home to a number of Universities with stats departments (e.g. Toronto, York, McMaster, Western, Waterloo, Queen’s, Guelph, Windsor, Brock, Trent) one possibility is that these are former students and faculty who want to keep a link to Southern Ontario.

To try to consolidate and serve such a diverse audience we launched a website

(SORA-TABA www.sorataba.org) but received no feedback from the mailing lists. The construction and now maintenance of the site falls to a few long-term “soldiers” who are always there to help with the Chapter - the website seemed to create work, but did not attract any additional volunteers or new members. Traditionally the Chapter activities are very Toronto centric – TABA organizing bio pharma type seminars and the Business Analytics group organizing after-work seminars usually hosted by one of the major financial institutes. In this last year we were able to integrate a very enthusiastic student member to the SORA team. Work still has to be done passing resolutions etc., to support the organizational aspects but the outcome will be a Student Chapter; we are very excited that ASA has launched a collateral movement in this direction.

I’d like to hear from other groups with ideas about this “diversity challenge” and how best to serve the ASA members. The next initiative – thanks to JSM 2014, is seeing if we can get statistics, based on the common core work, into the grade school and high school curriculums and use this as an impetus to get local statisticians to act as resources to the teaching staff. The hope is to attract the younger statisticians who are interested in the schooling of their children as possible “resources” and also be less “Toronto centric” as education is a provincial responsibility. This will not be a short-term project but with SORA backing we hope to move forward this year.

COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS GOVERNING BOARD (COCGB)

Chair (2015)

Linda J. Young

USDA NASS

425 8th St., N.W. Apt. 344

Washington, DC 20004, United States

Phone: (352) 281-6469

Linda.Young@nass.usda.gov

Past-Chair (2014)

John R. Stevens

Utah State University

3900 Old Main Hill

Logan, UT 84322-3900, United States

Phone: (435) 797-2818

john.r.stevens@usu.edu

Chair-Elect (2015)

Ananda A. Jayawardhana

Pittsburg State University

1701 South Broadway

Pittsburg, KS 66762, United States

Phone: (620) 235-4414

ananda@pittstate.edu

Secretary / Treasurer (2015)

Josh Habiger

Oklahoma State University

Department of Statistics 301 MSCS Bldg

Stillwater, OK 74078-1056, United States

Phone: (785) 565-3993

jhabige@okstate.edu

Communications Officer (2015)

Anamaria S. Kazanis

Michigan State University

24284 Woodham Road

Novi, MI 48374, United States

(248) 561-9557

kazanisa@msu.edu

Board Representative (2015-2017)

W.Y. Wendy Lou

University of Toronto

Dalla Lana School of Public Health 155 College Street

Toronto, ON M5T 3M7, Canada

Phone: (416) 946-7804

wendy.lou@utoronto.ca

Board Representative (2013-2015)

Mary J. Kwasny

Northwestern University

1162 S Elmwood Ave

Oak Park, IL 60304, United States

Phone: (312) 503-2294

m-kwasny@northwestern.edu

Board Representative (2014-2016)

Daniel R. Jeske

University of California, Dept of Statistics

Room 1340 Olmsted Hall, 900 University Ave

Riverside, CA 92521, United States

Phone: (951) 827-3014

daniel.jeske@ucr.edu

Vice-Chair, District 1 (2015-2017)

Mimi Y. Kim

Albert Einstein College of Medicine

1300 Morris Park Ave. The Belfer Bldg., Room 1303B

Bronx, NY 10461-1926, United States

Phone: (718) 430-2017

mikim@aecom.yu.edu

Vice-Chair, District 2 (2015-2017)

Robert E. Johnson

Vanderbilt University

Department of Biostatistics 1161 21st Ave S, S-
2323 MCN
Nashville, TN 37232-2158 , United States
Phone: (615) 322-2001
robert.e.johnson@vanderbilt.edu

Phone: (703) 684-1221
rick@amstat.org

Vice-Chair, District 3 (2013-2015)

Alexandra L. Hanlon

965 Dale Rd
Meadowbrook, PA 19046, United States
Phone: (267) 269-4007 cell
alhanlon@nursing.upenn.edu

Vice-Chair, District 4 (2013-2015)

Jeffrey D. Dawson

University of Iowa
Dept of Biostatistics N311 CPHB, 105 River St
Iowa City, IA 52242, United States
Phone: (319) 384-1510
jeffrey-dawson@uiowa.edu

Vice-Chair, District 5 (2014-2016)

Julia L. Sharp

Clemson University
O-116 Martin Hall
Clemson, SC 29634, United States
Phone: (864) 656-3252
jsharp@clemson.edu

Vice-Chair, District 6 (2014-2016)

Johanna S. Hardin

Pomona College
Department of Mathematics
610 N. College Ave
Claremont, CA 91711, United States
Phone: (909) 607-8717
jo.hardin@pomona.edu

Staff Liaison (2010-2020)

Rick G. Peterson

American Statistical Association
732 North Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314, United States