ASA Government Statistics Section

2019 looks to be an exciting year for GSS!

GSS has several upcoming events and initiatives for GSS members and community. The GSS website has new content and updates to keep the community informed: https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection

GSS Award nominations and competitions are open and applications are invited - details p3.

Stayed tuned as the GSS Professional Webinar Series co-sponsored by SSS develops (see p4) – we invite ideas and participation! GSS invites state and local government members to become more involved with GSS as we look for ways to better engage and serve this important part of our community and membership.

GSS is sponsoring and participating in conferences and workshops in 2019. As always, GSS will have an active presence at JSM, hosting 5 invited session, 7 topic contributed sessions, and 3 roundtables. GSS will launch our Mentoring initiative at one of these roundtables (see p4).

Content

GSS 2019 Awards are Open

2018 Data Expo Winners at JSM 2018 - see p3 for full list of winners
Information and deadlines for GSS 2019 Awards and Competitions - p3-4

Educational Category: Tom Fisher and Robert Garrett (Wendy Martinez)
Professional Category: Dooti Roy, Gregory Vaughan - Boehringer Ingelheim

GSS 2019 Executive Board

Elizabeth Mannshardt (EPA) – Chair
Katherine (Jenny) Thompson (Census) – Chair-Elect
Marilyn Seastrom (DOE) – Past-Chair
Tara Murphy (NASS) – Secretary/Treasurer
Jeffery Gonzalez (BLS) – Program Chair
Michael Yang (NORC) – Program Chair-Elect
Jenny Guarino (USDOT) – Publications Officer
Jennifer Parker (CDC) – Council of Sections Representative
Michael Davern (NORC) – COPAFS Representative

Greetings GSS New and Returning Members,

As the 2019 Chair and 2019 Past-Chair of the *Government Statistics Section (GSS)*, we would like to welcome you as a new member! To take full advantage of your new membership, we encourage you to start by visiting the GSS web page: http://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection. The ASA communities and the section's web page are the best places to connect with other GSS members and to learn more about our mission, history, and upcoming events you might be interested in. You can also visit our section's discussion group in the ASA Community, where members can post threads. Start at http://amstat.org/, login to your ASA account, then go to ASA Community -> Communities: My Communities -> Government Statistics Section.

One of the best ways to benefit from your GSS membership is to take advantage of all of the offerings organized or co-sponsored by our section. GSS organizes and sponsors sessions for the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) each year. GSS also hosts an informative and fun business meeting and mixer at JSM that includes honoring GSS Awardees. It is a great opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues as well as make new ones. If you attend JSM, be sure to join us!

Other regular GSS activities include the Data Expo (co-sponsored with the *Statistical Graphics* section) and the Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop (a one-day conference co-sponsored with the *Business and Economic Statistics* section and the *Washington Statistical Society*). GSS also sponsors an annual Student Paper Competition, the Herriot Award, the Griffith Mentoring Award, and the Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Award. We also work "behind the scenes," underwriting topical conferences and workshop related to the GSS mission such as the International Conference on Establishment Statistics and the Adaptive Design Workshop. Our newsletter is published a couple of times per year and is sent out via e-mail to all section members - past issues can be found on our website.

There are several ways to become involved with the GSS. We are continuously on the lookout for member suggestions of deliverables of use to our membership, such as continuing education courses (especially webinar or short course topics) or sponsored workshops. Volunteer to help with the newsletter or be on the program committee of a workshop. GSS is always looking for individuals to become Section Officers. It is a great opportunity to be a key part of our growing community and to help shape our future activities to meet your needs and those of others in our profession. It is also a great way to develop your own network of professional contacts. Please contact a current section officer in case of further questions (http://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/aboutus/officers) or if you are interested in becoming a section officer yourself. We welcome enthusiastic newcomers who are interested in learning how GSS operates!

If you have any questions, you can post in our ASA Community discussion group (as outlined above) or feel free to contact us at or mannshardt@stat.ncsu.edu or Marilyn.Seastrom@ed.gov. We look forward to hearing from you, and again, welcome to the *Government Statistics Section*!
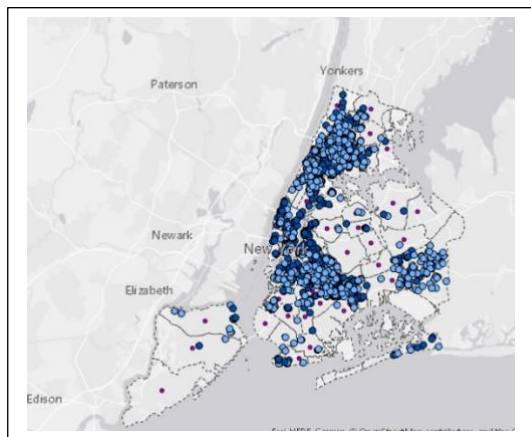
Sincerely,

Elizabeth Mannshardt
US Environmental Protection Agency
and North Carolina State University
GSS Chair, 2019

Marilyn Seastrom
National Center for Education Statistics
US Department of Education
GSS Past-Chair, 2019

GSS Award Competitions – Approaching Deadlines

Data Expo 2019

GSS is excited to host an annual Data Challenge Expo to be jointly sponsored by three ASA Sections – Statistical Computing, Statistical Graphics, and Government Statistics. The Data Challenge Expo is open to anyone who is interested in participating. This includes government, industry, academia, retirees, and students. There are two main categories of participants: Students/Educational and Professionals. Winners will be recognized at JSM.

The data set for the 2019 data challenge is the New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS). The NYCHVS is a representative survey of the New York City housing stock and population sponsored by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). It is the longest running housing survey in the country.

Research questions include consideration of the importance of housing quality and conditions and how they have shifted over time, possible impacts of new rent control measures as well as the costs and benefits of renting versus owning, creation of a gentrification measure, and describing changes in housing conditions for second generational immigrant households.

Look for the 2019 Data Expo winners in a SPEED session at JSM 2019!

2018 Data Expo Winners

Educational Category
- **First Place**: Queen Ikhelowa and Darren Keeley, California State University, East Bay, "*Modeling and Mapping Weather Forecast Accuracy*"
- **Second Place**: Jill Lundell, Brennan Bean, Utah State University, "*Let's Talk About the Weather*"
- **Second Place**: Benjamin William Schweitzer, Nichole Rook, Ryan Estep, Robert Garrett, Miami University, "*An analysis on the Accuracy of Weather Forecasts*"

Professional Category
- **First Place:** Dooti Roy, Gregory Vaughan (Boehringer Ingelheim)

Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship – April 1

Awarded jointly with the ASA's Social Statistics Section, this scholarship supports work toward a career in government statistics. The scholarship encourages promising young statisticians to consider a future in government statistics by providing up to $1,000 for use in exploring any of a broad number of opportunities. The Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship (WJSS) was created to honor the memory of a founding member of the Government Statistics Section and a longtime contributor to federal statistics.

This scholarship is for students and others early in their careers who show an interest in government statistics. Applications will be evaluated on relevance of the proposed activity to government statistics, quality of the proposed activity, innovation/ingenuity of the proposed project, feasibility of completion of the activity, the applicant's career stage, and past performance as reflected in the letters of recommendation.

Applications are due to Kevin Konty (kkonty@health.nyc.gov) by **April 1, 2019.**

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https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/awards/competitions

GSS Award Nominations are Open

The Government Statistics Section is proud to sponsor and co-sponsor several awards in 2019. Applications for deserving candidates are welcomed and encouraged from the GSS community.
https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/awards/nominations

2019 Pat Doyle Award – April 1

The award is given to a person who contributes to the GSS in a way that leaves a lasting impact on GSS and ASA. Recipients will receive a plaque and be recognized at the GSS Business Meeting at JSM as well as on the GSS website and newsletter. **Nominations due April 1st**. Nomination letters can be sent to GSS Chair Elizabeth Mannshardt at mannshardt@stat.ncsu.edu.

2019 Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award - March 22

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award recognizes and encourages the mentoring of junior staff in the statistical community in federal, state, or local government. Preference will be given to individuals with a track record of mentoring government statisticians. **Nomination packets** are mailed in and are due **March 22, 2019.** Questions can be directed to the Chair of the Award Committee: **Bill Mockovak** at Mockovak.William@bls.gov.

2019 Roger Herriot Award – April 1

The award is intended to reflect dedication to the issues of measurement, improvements in the efficiency of data collection programs, and improvements and use of statistical data for policy analysis. Team nominations are encouraged. The award consists of a $1,000 honorarium and a framed citation, which will be presented at JSM. WSS may also host a seminar given by the winner. Completed packages must be received by **April 1**. Electronic submissions can be sent to Committee Chair Al Gottschalck at Alfred.O.Gottschalck@census.gov

GSS 2019 Initiatives

GSS aims to bring the government statistics community professional development opportunities
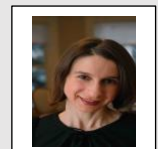
State and Local Government – GSS aims to develop opportunities within GSS for state and local government members. Contact GSS Chair Elizabeth Mannshardt (mannshardt@stat.ncsu.edu) for more information, to become involved, or to share ideas for professional development, outreach, and further interaction within GSS.

Webinars - GSS is planning to provide professional webinars for its members and community. Look for our series on **Usage of Blended Data and Combining Alternative Source Data: Methods, Challenges, and Considerations in the Era of Big Data** launching this fall in partnership with the Social Statistics Section (SSS).

- **How Rare is Rare? The Importance of Validation** - presented by Professor Aric LaBarr, North Carolina State University's Institute for Advanced Analytics.

- **Introduction to Machine Learning** - presented by Professor Cynthia Rudin, Duke University

Full abstracts and bios: https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/events

If you have ideas for a webinar that you would like to see take place, or have a developed webinar topic that you would like to give, please contact GSS Chair Elizabeth Mannshardt.

Upcoming Conferences

JSM 2019 – The Joint Statistical Meetings will be in Denver, CO July 27 – Aug 1, 2019.

GSS will host several sessions at JSM and invites members and the community to the GSS Business Meeting and Mixer

GSS Invited Sessions will include Challenges and Breakthroughs in Analyzing Big Survey Data, Developing Multi-Purpose Imputed or Synthetic Data for Official Statistics, Official Statistics at the Crossroads: Data Quality and Access in an Era of Heightened Privacy Risk, Data Fabrication and Falsification: Protecting the Credibility and Impacts of Surveys, and Learning from the Past – A History of Censuses

GSS Topic Contributed Sessions include the GSS Student Paper Competition Winners, Improving Data Collection: Challenges in Survey Practice, Differential Privacy Research and Applications at the U.S. Census Bureau, Assessing the Quality of Integrated Data, Statistical Data Editing Modernization, Time Series in Government and National Statistics, and Statistical advances in population research in the developing world.

Look to register for GSS Roundtables - *Combining Probability and Nonprobability Samples for Estimation* and *Synthetic Data as an Alternative to PUMS: Challenges, Success, and Issues.*

New this year! *GSS Mentoring Round table* - GSS is planning to host a mentoring session designed to encourage diverse participation and engage young professionals and students who may not normally have access to or interaction with more senior, advanced-career members of the GSS community.   To participate as a mentor, please contact GSS 2019 Chair Elizabeth Mannshardt mannshardt@stat.ncsu.edu. Details for mentees coming soon.
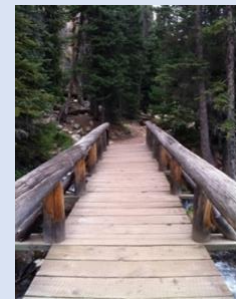

GSS JSM 2019 Representatives

Program Chair: Jeffrey M. Gonzalez (Gonzalez.Jeffrey@bls.gov)

Program Chair-Elect: Michael Yang (Yang-Michael@norc.org)

Join GSS for JSM 2019 in Denver!

Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop

SAVE THE DATE! November 20th, 2019 at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Organized by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, SAPW is a one-day conference for public employees (and others) actively involved in seasonal adjustment and related time series methods. This is your opportunity to share experiences in producing seasonal adjustments; give details of interesting time series estimation problems and possible solutions; discuss best practices in seasonal adjustment, time series modeling, or benchmarking; share lessons learned, tips, and shortcuts; present applied research in the practice of time series estimation.

Our featured speaker will be **Professor Jonathan Wright**, Department of Economics, Johns Hopkins University.
Look for a call for papers/presentations and registration information. Contact: esmd.seasonal.workshop@census.gov

ICES 2020 **The Sixth International Conference on Establishment Statistics (ICES VI**) will be held in **New Orleans, Louisiana, June 15-18, 2020**. Continuing in the tradition of ICES-I to ICES-V, ICES VI will explore new areas of establishment statistics, as well as reflect state-of-the-art methodology, promoting discussion of a broad range of issues related to the statistics of businesses, farms, or institutions. Participants come from academia, government statistical agencies, private businesses, statistical associations, and other sectors with an interest in international best practices in conceptualization, design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

If that isn't enough to entice you, perhaps the location will. The conference will be at the Ritz Carlton in the historic (and fun) French Quarter of New Orleans - a unique city known for its vibrant music and delicious beignets. Proposals for Invited sessions are accepted through **June 13**. http://ww2.amstat.org/meetings/ices/2020/invitedsessions.cfm

GSS Executive Officer Candidate Profiles

GSS Chair-Elect 2020

Michael Messner, US EPA

As an officer of GSS, I expect to enthusiastically support and promote the following: interagency communities of practice and engagement linking of intra-agency communities of practice cross-sector (government, academic and corporate) communication, collaboration and knowledge-sharing platforms for knowledge management (KM) and sharing the movement toward open data, open analytics and open information Regarding interagency communities, I would reach out to OMB/Statistical and Science Policy staff to re-create something like SCOPE (the Statistical Community of Practice and Engagement). Clearly, many issues need attention and this group is a good starting point for interagency efforts to address them. Among the wide-ranging issues are survey non-response, code-sharing, measurement of sexual orientation & gender identity, information security, confidentiality, open code, platforms for KM and managing intra- & inter-agency communities of practice.

Michael Sinclair, Mathematica (Retired 2019)

With more than 32 years of experience working for the Federal government and working on Federal government contracts, Dr. Sinclair has a wealth of experience and knowledge of the challenges the Federal Statistical Agencies and other statistically related programs face in conducting their mission and serving their employees, and their key programs. Dr. Sinclair will use this knowledge and his experience to identify critical topics for discussion at the Joint Statistical Meetings and to ensure the most knowledgeable speakers are enlisted to address these items. Dr. Sinclair will work to help the Federal Statistical System work to achieve their mission in light of changing political directions, and to motivate and reward their staff for their service and to continue to seek innovative strategies to overcome every day and long-term challenges. Dr. Sinclair will find ways in this position to help agencies communicate as a unified group on lessons learned and share best practices for project and employee management.

GSS Program Chair-Elect 2020

Breda Munoz, RTI International

I am a statistician at RTI International. I have years of experience working with federal and private surveys and observational studies. It is an honor to be considered to serve in the Government Statistics Section. As representatives of the section, we are the voice of our members, and I intent to work closely with all to develop activities intended to disseminate current and new practices used in the development of government statistics. We will encourage collaboration between the government, universities, non-profits and private institutions, in a way that all will benefit and learn from these types of interaction.

William Cecere, Westat

I am honored to have the opportunity to run for the position of GSS Program Chair. I believe that my experiences working as the secretary for the Washington Statistical Society and a member of the ICES VI organizing committee have prepared me well for this position. The WSS has made significant progress increasing our membership amongst the data science community in addition to increasing the diversity of our membership across many dimensions. I believe that I could use some of the strategies that we employed to benefit the GSS membership and activity.

Be sure to vote in the ASA Elections this May!