

GSS/SSS January 2014 NEWSLETTER
Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections
American Statistical Association

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**UPCOMING DEADLINES AND EVENTS:**

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|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>February 3</b>     | <b>DEADLINE</b> -online submission of JSM abstracts                         |
| <b>February 20-22</b> | Conference on Statistical Practice                                          |
| <b>April 24-26</b>    | 2014 SIAM International Conference on Data Mining                           |
| <b>June 1-4</b>       | 50 <sup>th</sup> Summer Research Conference in Statistics and Biostatistics |
| <b>August 2-7</b>     | 2014 Joint Statistical Meetings                                             |

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**PLANNING FOR JSM 2014: ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2014 INVITED PAPER SESSION,
VOLUNTEERS TO CHAIR CONTRIBUTED SESSIONS, CALL TO SUBMIT SPEED SESSION
PRESENTATIONS **NEW!****

Submitted by Grace O'Neil (GSS Program Chair) and Mike Sinclair (SSS Program Chair)

GSS INVITED PAPER SESSIONS

We are pleased to announce the GSS invited paper sessions for the 2014 JSM.

Monday, August 4

10:30 am-12:20 pm “Measuring Same Sex Couples, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity in Population-based Surveys,” *Organizer: Chris Johnson, CDC*

Wednesday, August 6

2:00 am -3:50 pm “Evaluating Official Statistics,” *Organizer: Scott Fricker, BLS*

Thursday August 7

8:30-10:20 am “Innovative Use of Response Rates for Survey Management,”
Organizer: Jenny Thompson, Census

SSS INVITED PAPER SESSIONS

We are pleased to announce the SSS invited paper sessions for the 2014 JSM.

Sunday, August 3

2:00-3:50 pm “Casual Inference when Covariates Are Measured with Error,”
Organizer: Elizabeth A Stuart, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Monday, August 4

8:30-12:20 am “Social Media Analysis,” *Organizer: Dan Kasprzyk, (Retired) NORC at the University of Chicago*

Tuesday, August 5

2:00-3:50 pm “The Past, Present, and Future of Federal Surveys: Observations from the Committee on National Statistics,” *Organizer: Carol C House, National Academies, Committee on National Statistics*

Wednesday, August 6

10:30 am-12:20 pm “Statistical Analysis of Educational Data: Challenges and Opportunities,” *Organizer: Jeffrey D Kromrev, University of South Florida*

Thursday, August 7

10:30 am-12:20 pm “Human Rights Violations: How Do We Begin Counting the Dead,” *Organizer: Megan Price, Human Rights Data Analysis Group*

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO CHAIR CONTRIBUTED SESSIONS

If you are going to attend the 2014 Joint Statistical Meetings in Boston, Massachusetts (August 2-7, 2014), you are invited to volunteer as a contributed session chair for SSS- or GSS-sponsored sessions. More information about session chair responsibilities can be found at <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2014/chairs.cfm>. To volunteer, please contact Grace O'Neill (GSS 2014 Program Chair, ge_oneill@yahoo.com) or Mike Sinclair (SSS 2014 Program Chair, MSinclair@mathematica-mpr.com) for more information.

CALL TO SUBMIT SPEED SESSIONS

This year, GSS and SSS will each be sponsoring a speed session at JSM. This is a new approach for ASA and one that was met with a lot of positive feedback from both presenters and audience members last year. A speed session consists of 20 oral presentations of approximately 10 minutes each with an electronic poster session later the same day. If you are interested in participating, please contact Grace O'Neill, GSS Program Chair (ge_oneill@yahoo.com) or Mike Sinclair, SSS Program Chair (MSinclair@mathematica-mpr.com) for more information.

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**NOMINATIONS FOR JEANNE E GRIFFITH MENTORING AWARD    NEW!**

*Submitted by Debbie Griffin, Griffith Award Selection Committee*

Nominations are sought for the 2014 Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award to encourage the mentoring of junior staff in the statistical community in the Federal, State, or Local government. It is awarded annually to a supervisor, technical director, team coordinator, or other member of the Federal, State, or Local government statistical staff who is nominated by a supervisor and co-workers for his or her efforts in supporting the work and developing the careers of junior staff.

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award was established to honor Dr. Griffith who died in August 2001 after working for more than 25 years in the Federal statistical system. Throughout her career, and especially in her latter senior management positions at the National Center for Education Statistics and the National Science Foundation, one of Jeanne's highest priorities was to mentor and encourage younger staff at all levels to learn, to grow, and to recognize and seize career opportunities as they came along.

Nominations for 2014 will be accepted beginning in **January 2014**. Nominations should be prepared in the form of a letter or memorandum for the Award Selection Committee. The letter or memorandum should summarize the nominee's actions that support and encourage junior staff in the Federal, State, or Local statistical community in developing their careers. Nominations may be accompanied by up to six supporting letters.

The last date for submission of nominations is **April 4, 2014**, and the Award Committee will make its determination of the award winner by **April 30, 2014**. The award will consist of a \$1,000, a citation, and a plaque, which will be presented at a ceremony arranged by the co-sponsors in **June 2014**.

For more information about the nominating process for the 2014 award, please go to:  
<http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/JEGform14.doc> or  
<http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/JEGform14.pdf>.

If you have questions about the award, please contact Rick Peterson at [rick@amstat.org](mailto:rick@amstat.org) (703) 684-1221, and Deborah Griffin at [Deborah.H.Griffin@census.gov](mailto:Deborah.H.Griffin@census.gov) (301) 763-2855.

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2014 WRAY JACKSON SMITH SCHOLARSHIP NEW!

Submitted by Linda Gage, Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Committee Chair

The Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship (WJSS) was created to honor the memory of a founding member of the GSS and a long-time contributor to federal statistics. Dr. Smith's federal career spanned four decades and included positions in the Office of Economic Opportunity, where he was responsible for the operational start-up of the Job Corps and evaluation of manpower development programs; the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in what was then the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, where he oversaw the policy research data center and directed the Income Survey Development Program (the predecessor to the Survey of Income and Program Participation); and the Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, where he directed energy modeling and data systems development and provided oversight of the Department's surveys of energy consumption in multiple sectors. After retiring from the federal government in 1983, Dr. Smith continued to play a role in federal statistics from the private sector, first as a visiting senior fellow at Mathematica Policy Research and then at Synectics for Management Decisions, Inc., before founding Harris-Smith Research, an operations research/management science consulting group, with Carl Harris. In 1997 Dr. Smith established the independent, nonprofit Harris-Smith Institutes to provide statistical research and a range of other services to other nonprofit organizations and governmental entities. He served as president of the organization until his death at the age of 75, in May 2000.

The WJSS was established by the GSS in 2001, with several other organizations recognized as Founding Sponsors. These include the Social Statistics Section (SSS) of ASA, which joined the GSS in 2005 as a primary sponsor of the award; the Caucus for Women in Statistics; the Washington Statistical Society; and both Mathematica and Synectics. In addition, upon its disbandment in 2002, the Harris-Smith Institutes donated a substantial sum to the scholarship fund, which achieved a milestone in 2004 by reaching \$25,000, sufficient to establish an endowment through the ASA.

The WJSS is intended to encourage young statisticians to consider a career in government service. The WJSS Award provides funding of \$1,000 to be used in ways that will advance the recipient's exposure to or experience with the application of statistics to problems relevant to any level of government. Past winners have used their awards to attend the Joint Statistical Meetings or other professional conferences; to take short courses or college classes on topics related to data analysis, measurement, or data

quality; and to support aspects of their continued public policy research. Funds may be used for travel, board, tuition or registration fees, or for the purchase of books, software, data sets, or other supporting materials for research projects.

The WJSS is targeted at students and others early in their careers who show an interest in government statistics. Applicants must have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent level of education. Membership in the GSS, SSS, or the ASA is not required. Applicants are asked to submit a proposal for the activity to be funded and to complete an application form (found on the GSS website at <<http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt>>) and provide two letters of recommendation. Materials should be submitted to:

Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Committee
c/o Linda Gage
3210 Shelter Cove Avenue
Davis, CA 95616

or electronically to Linda.Gage@sbcglobal.net. The application deadline for this year's award is **April 1, 2014**.

Other members of the 2014 Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Committee are Jennifer Park and Joseph Salvo. Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria: 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. The award winner will be announced by mid-April, 2014. All applicants will be notified by e-mail.

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#### **NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR ROGER HERRIOT AWARD   NEW!**

*Submitted by John Dixon, Chair of the Roger Herriot Award Committee*

Nominations are sought for the **2014 Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics**. The award is intended to reflect the special characteristics that marked Roger Herriot's career including:

- Dedication to the issues of measurement;
- Improvements in the efficiency of data collection programs; and
- Improvements and use of statistical data for policy analysis.

The award is not limited to senior members of an organization, nor is it to be considered as a culmination of a long period of service. Individuals or teams at all levels within Federal statistical agencies, other government organizations, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, and the academic community may be nominated on the basis of their contributions. As innovation often requires or results from teamwork, team nominations are encouraged. Team innovations often are more

lasting, resulting in real paradigm shifts, not just one-off improvements. For an example, see the 1998 Herriot (team) award and the 2013 project awards.

The recipient of the 2014 Roger Herriot Award will be chosen by a committee comprising representatives of the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association, and of the Washington Statistical Society. Roger Herriot was associated with, and strongly supportive of, these organizations during his career. The award consists of a \$1,000 honorarium and a framed citation, which will be presented at a ceremony at the Joint Statistical Meetings in August 2014. The Washington Statistical Society will also host a seminar given by the winner on a subject of his or her own choosing.

The previous recipients of the Roger Herriot Award are Joseph Waksberg (Westat); Monroe Sirken (National Center for Health Statistics); Constance Citro (National Academy of Sciences); Roderick Harrison (U.S. Census Bureau) and Clyde Tucker (Bureau of Labor Statistics); Thomas Jabine (SSA, EIA, CNSTAT); Donald Dillman (Washington State University); Jeanne Griffith (OMB, NCES, NSF); Daniel Weinberg (U. S. Census Bureau); David Banks (FDA, BTS, NIST); Paula Schneider (U.S. Census Bureau); Robert E. Fay III (U.S. Census Bureau); Nathaniel Schenker (National Center for Health Statistics); Nancy J. Kirkendall (Office of Management and Budget); Elizabeth Martin (U.S. Census Bureau); Lynda Carlson (National Science Foundation); Katharine Abraham (University of Maryland); Michael Messner (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency); Paul Biemer (RTI International); and The 1973 Exact Match Project.

Nominations for the 2014 award will be accepted beginning in **January 2014**.

Nomination packages should contain:

- A cover letter from the nominator that includes references to specific examples of the nominee's contributions to innovation in Federal statistics. These contributions can be to methodology, procedure, organization, administration, or other areas of Federal statistics, and need not have been made by or while a Federal employee.
- Up to six additional letters in support that demonstrate the innovativeness of each contribution.
- A current vita for the nominee with current contact information. For team nominations, the vitae of all team members should be included.

The committee may consider nominations made for prior years, but it encourages resubmission of those nominations with updated information.

For more information, contact John Dixon, Chair of the 2014 Roger Herriot Award Committee, at 202-619-7516 or [Dixon.john@bls.gov](mailto:Dixon.john@bls.gov). **Completed packages must be received by April 1, 2014.** Electronic submissions in MS-Word or as a "pdf" file are strongly encouraged.

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COUNCIL OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ON FEDERAL STATISTICS: DECEMBER 2013 MEETING MINUTES NEW!

Submitted by Nancy Bates, Government Statistics Section

Trust in government is generally low. According to opinion polls conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 1958-2013, Americans' overall trust in the federal government recently hit a new low – Only 19% of the public say that they trust “the government in Washington” “most of the time” or “just about always.” Michael Dimock, Director of the Center presented findings that show that: Political events affect trust; Satisfaction with the state of the nation and the nation's economic health correlate with degree of trust; Trust can be partisan; and a change in public trust leads changes in the degree of turnover in the Congress. The data indicate that lack of trust in Congress, specifically the *members* of Congress, explains the bulk of the trust problem.

“Breaking news” can affect trust specifically in *government statistics*. The Census Bureau's Jennifer Hunter Childs presented preliminary findings of a study commissioned by six statistical agencies to gauge trust in federal statistics and the statistical use of administrative records. The poll conducted for the study has taken place nearly every night since February 2012 and asks about and attitudes towards the institutions that produce federal statistics. For most of the period, a large majority of respondents agree that policy makers need good statistics over time, though the gap between agreement and disagreement about relevance appears to have decreased since the federal government shutdown. Belief in the confidentiality of and trust in federal statistics decreased significantly over the period.

When respondents are given the choice between a statistical agency using their administrative records and answering a survey, respondents are more in favor of getting data from an administrative record when it comes from federal government sources than from other sources. A greater percentage of respondents who were assured in the poll that their name and other personal information would never be singled out and would only be used for statistics, would rather have the government access their administrative records than obtain the information by surveying them. Mistrust and skepticism about privacy were primary explanatory factors for those who would not want their administrative records accessed.

Journalists can be very important in forming public opinion. So says Peyton Craighill, Polling Manager for the *Washington Post*. Nevertheless, he showed (2013) data from Gallup that illustrate low public confidence in newspapers and television news – both absolutely (23%) and relative to a wide range of other institutions – and confidence in newspapers is trending down over time. Still, what newspapers say does matter because they still “have the biggest microphone.” Craighill suggests that one way statistical agencies can increase trust is by providing clearer description of numbers that may be released only in a table lacking context for non-economists, verbal elaboration, or graphical illustration. Access to “real” subject matter experts for help in interpreting data, and more “help” features on websites, would be particularly valuable. The more journalists understand what they are reporting, the more likely it is that their readers trust them, and, in turn, convey through a ripple effect more trust in the agencies that produce the data.

Statistical agencies face challenges of mistrust. Mistrust in government may affect federal survey response rates and can thus increase the costs of reliable survey data collection. Tom Nardone Associate Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that, while there is a difference between trust in government and in federal statistics, BLS enumerators find that they are not so distinct in individuals' minds. Over the past few years, BLS field staff have reported an increase in anti-government sentiment and note that upticks in this sentiment coincide with an increase in refusals. He speculated that BLS survey results might be affected by mistrust that leads to refusal by one or more CEO's of major national or global companies to respond to business surveys. He says the BLS challenge is in reassuring survey respondents and the public at large of the transparency and policy neutrality of BLS statistics. Jennifer Madans, Associate Director of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), contests there is very little agencies can do to change the factors underlying mistrust, and wonders whether mistrust in the "big," better known agencies affects trust in "smaller," more anonymous agencies. She doubts there is trust in the federal statistical system, noting that there is no public identity for the system, *per se*. She says that for NCHS, the issue translates into an informed consent problem. Though NCHS respondents may be less affected by trust than by burden, Madans believes that for NCHS and other federal statistical agencies, the key to sustaining trust is to be vigilant about confidentiality protection and following statistical principles. Marilyn Seastrom, Chief Statistician for the National Center for Education Statistics, suggested that federal agencies have a lot of metadata that could be useful in studying issues of trust. She hypothesizes that the more an agency is in the news, the more people solidify their position—positive or negative - regarding trust in the agency. All three agency spokespersons mentioned that among the effects of mistrust are increases in survey cost and a potential decrease in the quality of findings. And a tradeoff may have to be made between devoting resources to directly increase response rates and quality vis-a-vis increasing the digestibility of data releases to increase trust and indirectly increase response rates by as trust levels rise. Finally, all agree that recognition, attribution, and understanding of what their agencies and the broader federal statistical system do for the public would ease the challenges they face.

Please Note: Dimock's, Childs' and Craighill's presentation slides, and Nardone's written comments are available at: http://www.copafs.org/meetings/december_2013.aspx The Pew study on which Dimock reported is also summarized on the Pew site: <http://www.people-press.org/2013/10/18/trust-in-government-interactive/>. A full set of meeting notes by COPAFS Secretary, Ken Hodges, is also available on the website.

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**COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES    NEW!**

*Submitted by Rick Peterson, Representative, Government Statistics Section*

Attendees were welcomed and current and newly elected members of the governing board were introduced. Each participant was asked to talk about his chapter and one activity or event that did or did not work for him. Dan K. talked about the upcoming issue of Chapter Chatter which will contain articles from over 20 chapters.



Teri Utlaut discussed the ISEF and its efforts to recruit judges and getting prizes. They also had a symposium (short course) and Chris Malone gave a talk on “The Effective Use of Statistics in Your Project). Over 200 attended and the room was packed with some waiting outside to get in. This year, ASA gave 20 copies of *Significance* to the students. The committee is also trying to find out if ASA is willing to provide an annual membership to the students. The science fair this year was held in Phoenix and next year will be in Los Angeles. One of her committee requested additional support for ISEF.

Like ISEF, the Travelling Courses program had another successful year. Anwar Hossain gave a presentation on the ISEF program. Last year, the committee planned for three courses for 2013, “Bayesian Data Analysis”, “Successful Data Mining in Practice”, and “Recent Development in Designed Experiment. “ The courses were held in 14 places; 7 courses are completed so far and another 7 will be completed this fall. Dan K. reminded the attendees that if they have any questions, they should ask Rick or any Board member.

Marlene Egger, Committee on Applied Statisticians, discussed the committee’s initiative. Her committee receives many requests for mentoring and this year, they received ASA funding for a partnership-mentoring program. She asked if there were any mentorship activities in the chapters (like Nevada). The Section on Statistical Consulting is also involved in a mentoring program. The Committee on Applied Statisticians developed a micro-site providing additional information, if needed.

Nat Schenker, president-elect, discussed his 3 and 1/3 initiatives. The first is revising the curriculum guidelines for undergraduate and graduate programs in statistics and high school AP statistics that ASA has developed. The second initiative is also in the area of education and is called professional development for working statisticians. This will entail forming a workgroup to develop training and leadership guidelines for working statisticians. The training will also be useful to students. The third initiative is developing a statistics portal, which would be a depository for statisticians where statistical information they need can be found. Finally, an initiative for which Nat has only 1/3 responsibility, is about “Big Data.” The profession needs to be more aggressive and get more involved with this hot topic. Bob, Marie, and Nat had an article in the June issue of AMSTAT NEWS and ASA members can read all about that topic in the June issue.

Ron Wasserstein, executive director, joined the Board and thanked the attendees for their work on behalf of ASA and the profession.

Dan K. mentioned the local chapter’s invited session at this year’s meeting will take place on Thursday, August 8. John Stevens talked about the workshop scheduled for Tuesday afternoon. John reminded the COC Representatives that this is another forum where they have a chance to exchange information on their activities to other chapters. He also talked about the Council of Chapters representative position and the research he did to determine how chapters felt about the position. There has been some discussion to modify or eliminate that position. Some see great value in this position; some chapters have a difficult time filling the position. One outcome of John’s research is that more

flexibility on the length of the appointment is desired (the appointment is for 3 years.) The reason for the three year term is to maintain continuity of knowledge and processes. The language for a proposed change will be developed later. John asked for any additional input from the attendees. In response to a question by Sam, Shane mentioned that the council would like to give as much flexibility to the chapters as possible. Dan K. asked to give any input to John.

Alex talked about the Chapter Summary Report and went through the document he had prepared in May.

Dan K. talked about the Roles and Responsibilities document and the links to this document.

Nick and Mary talked about the Board Representative reports and the Board initiatives, including funding for the Oregon chapters for raising statistical literacy in schools, and the endorsement for the MS degree guidelines prepared by the Education Workgroup. Guidelines are available on the ASA's website. They also talked about the Archives Committee activities and the likelihood of the Alabama chapter receiving a dissolution letter.

Dan K. handed out the Chapter Service Recognition Award certificates. The 2013 Awardees are as follows:

Jonaki Bose, Washington Statistical Society  
C.V. Damaraju, New Jersey  
Marianne Messina, Connecticut  
Stan Pounds, Western Tennessee  
V.A. Samaranayake, Mid-Missouri  
JungsywanSepanski, Mid-Michigan  
Stephan V. Stehman, Syracuse  
Gong Tang, Pittsburg

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COUNCIL OF SECTIONS BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES NEW!

Submitted by Rick Peterson, Representative, Government Statistics Section

Attendees were welcomed and current and newly elected members of the governing board were introduced. ASA Executive Director Ron W gave a report on the three initiatives launched by ASA president Marie Davidian for 2013 including raising awareness of statistics in science within AAAS, training the next generation of statisticians, and exploring ways to reduce the number of concurrent sessions at JSM. As a result of past president Bob Rodriguez' initiatives, we created a presentation skills improvement program, the ASA board adopted a set of desired outcomes for masters degree programs, we developed slides for members to use to communicate to other members about ASA activities, and planning for the 175th anniversary of the ASA is well underway. A new journal, *Statistics and Public Policy*, has been started. Two other

journals approved last year have begun publication: *SIAM/ASA Journal of Uncertainty Quantification* and the *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*.

Candidates for the Spring 2014 election (to take office in 2015) were announced. The Committee on Women in Statistics is sponsoring a conference in Research Triangle Park, NC May 15-17. Go to women-in-stats.org for more information.

A report from ASA President-Elect (Nat Schenker) was given that discussed the 3 and 1/3 initiatives that he wants to tackle during his tenure as ASA President. The first initiative will focus on undergraduate statistics education. A group being led by Nick Horton will evaluate the current ASA recommendations for undergraduate statistics courses and consider changes. The second initiative will focus on professional development (as a follow-up to one of Bob Rodriguez's initiatives on presentation and communication skills). A group being led by Janet Buckingham will work on developing training in statistical leadership for statisticians to develop their leadership skills. The third initiative will be to develop a statistics portal that will encompass all things statistical. This effort is being led by David Banks. The portal will include government publications, course curricula, data sets, etc. The final (1/3) initiative is related to Big Data. This is a joint initiative being led by Nat, Bob, and Marie. The broad goal is to identify ways we as statisticians can be a major player in Big Data and Data Science. A textual analysis short course will be given at the 2014 CPS and 2014 JSM. Meetings with leaders in the "Big Data" field (such as folks in Silicon Valley) will also take place in an effort to build bridges. An education workgroup composed of folks from academia, industry and government will make recommendations for statistics curricula to incorporate Big Data into the mix.

Future ASA President-Elect (David Morganstein) laid out his initiatives. David is interested in is a mentoring program. Similar initiatives have been (or are being) tried by SRMS, the Committee on Minorities in Statistics, the Committee on Women in Statistics and the Committee on Applied Statisticians. David is also considering experimenting with "JSM tour guides" who would help first time JSM attendees fit in. Section reps should contact David if they have any other ideas about these or other initiatives.

A report from COSGB Board (John Bailer, Janet Buckingham, Dick De Veaux) was given. ASA membership is up 400 this year compared to last year. JSM attendance this year is 5700 (5th highest of all time). Advertising revenues continue to decline so the BOD is considering increases in ASA dues and JSM registration fees. There will also be a PR campaign push for the 175th anniversary. There is a new Waller Education Career Award. The first award will be \$1000 in 2014. This is an ASA award. ASA has officially adopted a "Welcoming Environment" policy to encourage members to take responsibility for ensuring that everyone feels welcome at the association events and to help members become aware of aspects of their behavior that may make others feel harassed or unwelcome. This policy was presented on behalf of the Joint Committee on Women in the Mathematical Sciences.

The Ingenious Math and Stat Workshop was sponsored, in part, by ASA. See www.ingeniousmathstat.org for more information. There was discussion about what's next for Statistics2013. How can this initiative be made sustainable after 2013?

There was also discussion about how ASA can better engage ASA Fellows within and outside of the association, about changing the sector rotation (among academic, industry and government) for ASA President and Vice President candidates, and about sections considering having representation from all three sectors in their leadership.

The BOD endorsed the 5th edition of Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency from the Committee on National Statistics of the National Research Council. A 2014 PR campaign to better promote statistics will focus on advertising statistics as a cool new choice for students entering colleges and universities. The goal is to reach out to AP students/teachers, HS guidance counselors and HS district administrators. The Royal Statistical Society and Stats Canada both gave updates to the BOD. Both groups discussed the idea of creating more joint ventures with ASA. There is a BOD request that the editorial board of the journal Statistical Analysis and Data Mining consider changing the name of the journal to something that refers more directly to Big Data and Data Science. There was discussion about ASA as a “big tent” and whether this idea could be better promoted by using videos, addressing myths about ASA, and providing better website communication for individuals inside and outside of the big tent.

COSGB Treasurer (Rhonda DeCook) reminded all sections that they are required to submit their budgets (via the section treasurer) by the end of October each year. It is very important for outgoing section treasurers to pass along all files to incoming section treasurers and be available to answer any questions or concerns they may have. There is information available via the ASA website for new treasurers at <http://community.amstat.org/CouncilofSections/OfficersHandbook/Treasurer>. Incoming section treasurers will also get an email from Rhonda with FAQs. The amount of cash on hand (COH) a section should have varies greatly by section because the membership counts and average annual expenses vary greatly by section. In general, the revenue a section has on hand shouldn't be too high or too low; that is, sections should be spending their funds on their membership but they should also make sure not to have too few funds on hand. Rhonda will contact a section if it looks like their funds are getting too high or too low.

ASA Director of Operations (Steve Porzio) reported on the new ASA policy to charge sections with a flat fee of about \$500 to \$550 for each webinar that they host. This fee will cover ASA staff support for setting up webinars. Rick Peterson knows about the specific expenses involved with setup and will pass this information along to sections. Many section reps expressed concerns about these fees and that they were put into place without much notice. Steve reminded sections that this flat fee could be considered part of the expenses associated with providing services for membership, which is the goal—to spend money on members, and not make a profit. One alternative idea that was discussed is offering free webinars and ASA could absorb all costs related to setup. Two action items developed from this discussion:

- Rick Peterson will put together a summary of fees involved with webinar setup and distribute to sections.
- During section business meetings, section reps were to ask their membership about whether or not they would be interested in a “no fees” model for webinars and get back to COSGB during the Thursday response meeting.

COS Charter Changes Up For Vote (Janet Buckingham) were discussed. The proposed change to the COS charter is to require Section Chair-Elect and Section Rep to be elected positions. This change will not have a major impact since all but a few sections already hold elections for one or both of these positions. Voting on this change will happen via email prior to October 1.

Committee on Applied Statisticians' Mentoring Program (Eric Vance) reported that the mentoring program will serve two general purposes. First, it will provide direct mentorship to junior statisticians. There are 16 mentorship pairs that are in place for the first (pilot) year of this initiative. The goal of this pilot study is to determine what's involved in the process (based on mentor and mentee experiences) and what are best practices observed. Mentees are students and junior statisticians just starting their careers. Second, the hope is to eventually have this mentor program serve as a clearinghouse for all mentoring programs directly or indirectly associated with ASA. The idea would be that interested mentors or mentees could go to a website and find out information about mentorship programs. The program is looking for more volunteers so section reps should spread the word to their membership.

Report from SSPA on Section Initiatives (Natalie Hall) was given on why the SSPA was so successful over the past year. Reasons include the multitude of students and Masters-level statisticians interested in SSPA, hosting lots of webinars which has attracted new members, keeping their Microsite up-to-date and having 2 bloggers, being very active at the Conference on Statistical Practice and at JSM (with short courses and roundtables), spending money on sponsoring students at JSM and the Conference on Statistical Practice, and having a table at JSM where anyone can come and ask programming questions.

Sections are encouraged to get input from COSGB before submitting member initiatives to the ASA BOD. This is not required (just encouraged). Contact your COS Vice-Chair if interested. The section awards application process and information on officer responsibilities are located on the COS website.

COSGB is well aware that Invited Session Allocation is a major, ongoing concern among sections, especially with the continual increase in the number of sections. COSGB will continue to engage in conversations with the Committee on Meetings about this issue. The HPSS section would like ASA to consider offering lifetime section memberships to help alleviate the problem of ASA lifetime members forgetting to renew their section membership and, thus, being dropped from section membership lists. With input from ASA staff, the COSGB does not think granting lifetime section memberships is a

practical idea. The section reps were asked to discuss this at their JSM business meetings and bring ideas back to the Thursday COS rep meeting.

Section reps should be aware of electronic posters and speed poster sessions, which will both be going on at this year's JSM. Sections should also be aware that JSM proceedings will be available online in PDF format this year.

GOVERNMENT STATISTICS SECTION

The mission of the Government Statistics Section (GSS) is to promote the use of sound statistical theory and methods in the production of data at all levels of government--be it Federal, State, local, or international; assist in the broad dissemination of those data; and encourage good statistical practice by all users. Areas of interest for the Section include all that involve the production, dissemination, and application of governmental statistics, including concern with statistical policy issues, quality and usefulness of governmental data products, special problems of State and local data, comparability of data among different countries, and the role of professional statisticians in the public sector.

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SOCIAL STATISTICS SECTION

The Social Statistics Section seeks to advance research in social statistics, both in areas which involve the use of methods of statistical inquiry, and in those which involve the use of statistical data and the development of statistical measurement. This section will also plan for active participation in the affairs of the American Statistical Association by those interested in these matters and for representation of activities in this major field in the program of the ASA.

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