

**GSS/SSS SEPTEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER**  
**Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections**  
**American Statistical Association**

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**WENDY ALVEY HONORED AT 2006 ASA JSM**

On Tuesday, August 8, at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Seattle, WA, the American Statistical Association recognized a number of outstanding statisticians during its annual Plenary Awards Session. Wendy Alvey, who currently works at the Census Bureau and is the Government Statistics Section's COPAFS Representative, was one of five honorees to be presented the prestigious ASA Founders Award. The citation for the award read as follows:

**Wendy L. Alvey**, U.S. Census Bureau, for 30 years of distinguished service to the Association as a visionary member of several ASA committees, Sections and Chapters; for noteworthy contributions such as the well-known pamphlet, "Surveys and Privacy"; and for her mentoring of young statisticians to strive for excellence in writing and presenting at JSM and other professional conferences. **CONGRATULATIONS, WENDY!**



Shown Above: ASA Past President Fritz Scheuren congratulates Wendy Alvey (Census Bureau) on receiving the prestigious Founders Award.

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**WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY (WSS) – NEWLY ELECTED BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The following individuals were elected to the WSS board of directors:

President-elect: **Michael P. Cohen**

Methodology Program Chair: **Meena Khare**  
Representative at Large: **Polly Phipps & Allen Schirm**  
Treasurer: **Daniell Toth**

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## **STATISTICAL PARTNERSHIPS AMONG ACADEME, INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT (SPAIG) AWARD NOMINATIONS REQUESTED**

The American Statistical Association (ASA), through SPAIG Committee, is seeking nominations for the SPAIG Award to recognize outstanding partnerships established between academe and business, industry, and government organizations – and to promote new partnerships. This award differs from other ASA awards in that it recognizes organizations instead of individuals.

SPAIG was created in 1994. In the early years, meetings were held at which statisticians from all three organizations talked about what they could do for and with each others. As partnerships started to form, the SPAIG Committee felt that effective partnerships should be recognized by the ASA. Hence, the SPAIG Award has been presented prior to the President's Invited Address at the past two Joint Statistical Meetings. The quality of the past nominations has been high, but the quantity has been lower than anticipated. The Committee feels that there are many functioning partnerships out there that have not been nominated. The purpose of this article is to encourage these organizations to compete for the SPAIG Award.

The SPAIG Committee originally viewed a "partnership" as a collaborative effort between one academic unit and one or more organizations from Business, Industry, or Government (B/I/G). The SPAIG Award was established with this model in mind. The SPAIG Committee has since learned that successful partnerships come in many forms and that all of these partnerships support the mission of SPAIG. Hence, the criteria for the SPAIG Award have been expanded to include a wide range of partnerships.

The nomination request says that the SPAIG Award "recognizes outstanding partnerships between academe and business, industry, and government organizations." Many such partnerships begin with one statistician within each organization sharing ideas. This may lead to exchange visits, support for graduate students, consulting jobs, grant support for faculty, and continuing education opportunities for statisticians outside of academe. Through these activities, statistical problems from outside academe become classroom examples and dissertation topics. A nomination for the SPAIG Award might consist of an academic department partnering in small ways with several different organizations.. The "intellectual exchange" that results is the key component of a partnership. It is more important that there has been "intellectual exchange" and possibly some monetary exchange, where appropriate. If you have such a partnership in operation, please consider submitting a nomination for a 2007 SPAIG Award.

All nominations for consideration in the year 2007 must be submitted on the form which is available at <http://web.utk.edu/~wparr/spaig.html>. Award guidelines and guidelines for filling out the form are provided on the website, and the form may be printed or downloaded as a MS Word document or PDF file. Members who do not have access to the online form may contact Jai Won Choi (telephone 301-458-4144, FAX 301-458-4031, email [JWC7@cdc.gov](mailto:JWC7@cdc.gov)) to have a form sent to them. Please give careful attention to all instructions on the forms. The nomination package and any supporting materials must be received by Thursday, 1 March 2007.

Review of nominations and selection of the 2007 winning partnerships will be conducted by the SPAIG Committee. Nominations not receiving the award will be kept on file and reconsidered for the Award for up to two years. The Committee hopes that all nominated partnerships will agree to have a description of their efforts posted to the SPAIG Committee Web Site. These partnerships may also be the focus of a future Joint Statistical Meetings session.

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## **NCVHS DATA LINKAGES WORKSHOP - USING DATA LINKAGES TO IMPROVE STATISTICS ON HEALTH OUTCOMES**

The goal of this workshop is to stimulate interest and identify best practices in using linkages among administrative and survey data to improve our knowledge of health outcomes for the population and various subpopulations.

**Sponsor:** NCVHS Subcommittee on Populations

**When:** Monday, September 18- Tuesday, September 19, 2006  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Renaissance Washington DC Hotel  
999 9th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 898 9000

**Directions:** The hotel is located 2 1/2 blocks from the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metro station on the Yellow, Green, and Red lines, directly across from the Washington Convention Center.

**Cost:** None

**Registration:** None; however, SPACE IS LIMITED

**For further information, contact** Joan Turek at (202) 690 5965

**Agenda:** Follows – NOTE: Subject to Change

*Tentative Agenda*  
**NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON VITAL AND HEALTH STATISTICS**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON POPULATIONS**  
**September 18 and 19, 2006**

**Renaissance Washington, DC Hotel**  
**999 9<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.**  
**Washington, Dc 20001**

**Workshop on Data Linkages to Improve Health Outcomes**

**Goal:** Stimulate interest and identify best practices in using linkages among administrative and survey data to improve our knowledge of health outcomes for the population and various subpopulations and assist HHS agencies to better meet their responsibilities for performance measurement under various laws such as the Government Performance Results Act of 1993.

**Monday, September 18th**

|                    |                                            |                                                                               |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 – 9:15 a.m.   | Call to Order<br>Welcome and Introductions | Donald Steinwachs, Ph.D., Chair                                               |
| 9:15 – 9:30 a.m.   | The Importance of Data Linkage             | ???????                                                                       |
| 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.  | <b>Census Bureau</b>                       | Sally Obenski, <i>Assistant Chief<br/>For Administrative Records Research</i> |
| 10:00 – 10:15 a.m. | Break                                      | Ronald C. Prevost, <i>Special Assistant,<br/>Demographic Surveys Division</i> |
| 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. | <b>Census Bureau (continued)</b>           | Jerry Gates, <i>Chief Privacy Officer</i>                                     |
| 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.  | Lunch                                      |                                                                               |
| 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.   | <b>Health and Human Services Agencies</b>  | Jennifer Madans, <i>Associate Director for</i>                                |

*Science, National Center for Health Statistics (Christine Cox, Title)  
Spike Duzor, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services*

*Steven Cohen, Director of the Center for Financing Access and Cost Trends, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*

*Martin L. Brown, Chief, Health Services and Economics Branch, National Cancer Institute and Gerald Riley, Social Science Research Analyst, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services*

*John Drabek, Economist, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation*

4:00 – 4:45 p.m.      **Social Security Administration**

Howard Iams, *Research Advisor*

## **Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.      **IRS, Education and Veterans Administration**

*Tom Petska, Director Statistics of Income Division, IRS  
Richard Bjorklund, Director, Veterans Administration  
Chris Chapman, Program Director for Early Childhood and Household Studies, National Center for Education Statistics*

10:00 – 10:15 a.m.      Break

10:15 – 12:15 p.m.      **Maximizing the Benefits from Linked Data: Access for Research and Related**

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

12:15 – 1:15 p.m.      Lunch

*Heather Boushey, Economist, Center for Economic and Policy Research  
Brian Harris-Kojetin, OMB  
Deb Schrag, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center*

1:15 – 3:15 p.m.      **A Broader Perspective on the Role of Linkages**

*Fritz Scheuren, Vice President for Statistics, NORC and 2005 President of ASA  
Michael Davern, Assistant Professor University of Minnesota  
Julia Lane, Senior Vice President, NORC*

3:15 – 4:00 p.m.      **Wrap-up**  
4:00                      **Adjournment**

Subcommittee on Populations

Updated 9/7/2006 (Briefcase)

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**APDU 2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REMINDER...**

**Theme:** “Navigating Rivers of Data”

**When:** Thurs., October 5 – Fri., October 6, 2006

**Where:** Embassy Suites Hotel, Alexandria – Old Town, Virginia

[www.apdu.org/conference/2006/index.htm](http://www.apdu.org/conference/2006/index.htm)

**Important Deadlines!**

Tues., Sept. 5 – deadline for hotel reservations at conference rate

Fri., Sept. 15 – deadline for conference registration at the reduced rate

The annual conference of the Association of Public Data Users offers a collegial forum for data users, producers and intermediaries to exchange information, share perspectives on data and public policy issues, and explore critical data sources and user applications.

Over two days of plenary sessions, APDU 2006 attendees will hear from noted speakers on a range of factors influencing the collection, availability and application of public data. Join us for updates on federal executive and legislative activities, the latest information on Census 2010 planning and the American Community Survey, overviews of pertinent and innovative data collections, and much more!

**Register before Sept. 15**, and enjoy the entire conference at the reduced rate of \$350 for APDU members, \$450 for non-members. That's a savings of \$25 from the rate in effect after the 15th. Fees include all sessions, lunches, breaks, reception and conference materials.

**Download registration forms** at [www.apdu.org/conference/2006/register.htm](http://www.apdu.org/conference/2006/register.htm)

**This year's conference venue is the Embassy Suites** Hotel, 1900 Diagonal Rd., Alexandria – Old Town, Va. (703-684-5900) located across from the King Street metro station. Room rates are \$199/night, plus tax. Make your reservations by Sept. 5, and mention you are associated with APDU.

**For more information**, see [www.apdu.org/conference/2006/hotel.htm](http://www.apdu.org/conference/2006/hotel.htm)

**Have questions?**

Contact Patricia Becker, APDU Administrator, 248-354-6520, [info@apdu.org](mailto:info@apdu.org)

Association of Public Data Users  
c/o APB Associates  
28300 Franklin Road  
Southfield, Michigan 48034-1657

**For session and speaker information and updates**, see  
[www.apdu.org/conference/2006/agenda.htm](http://www.apdu.org/conference/2006/agenda.htm)

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**FEDERAL COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY (FCSM) STATISTICAL POLICY SEMINAR – EIGHTH IN A SERIES**

**Theme:** *Keeping Current: What We Know - What We Need To Learn*  
**Hosted by:** The Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS)  
**When:** November 28-29, 2006

**Keynote Address:** Kenneth Prewitt, Columbia University

**Location and Cost:**  
L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington D.C. 20024  
To Reserve a Room, Call: 202-484-1000

**Seminar Registration Cost:** \$195.00 per person  
**Registration Form** can be downloaded from our site at: [www.copafs.org](http://www.copafs.org)  
**For Further Information,** Contact the COPAFS Office at:  
Phone: 703-836-0404 Email: [copafs@aol.com](mailto:copafs@aol.com)

**Topics:**

- The Quality of Administrative Records for Statistical Uses
- Longitudinal Survey Designs: Current Best Practices and Continuing Challenges
- Providing Researchers Access to Federal Data
- The Future of Telephone Surveys
- Positioning the Federal Statistical System to Quickly Respond to Data Needs in Times of Crisis or Catastrophe
- Nonresponse Bias Analyses in Federal Surveys
- Incentives: New Results on the Effects of Incentives
- Total Survey Error in Economic Statistics
- How to Encourage Innovation
- Using Internet Panels For National Data
- Modeling Survey Costs: Towards a Research Agenda
- Establishing Archival Data Systems for Agency Historical Information

**Participants Will Include:** Statisticians, Economists, and Managers, as well as Other Professionals in the Broader Statistical Community who Share an Interest in Keeping Current on Issues Related to Federal Data

**Support Provided by:** Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \* Bureau of Economic Analysis \* Bureau of Justice Statistics \* Bureau of Labor Statistics \* Bureau of Transportation Statistics \* Energy Information Administration \* Environmental Protection Agency \* National Agricultural Statistics Service \* National Center for Education Statistics \* National Center for Health Statistics \* Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics of the Social Security Administration \* Statistics of Income Division of the Internal Revenue Service \* U.S. Census Bureau

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**JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR AND DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS**

The following job announcement is posted and may be viewed at:

<http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/>

**SALARY RANGE:** 109,808.00 - 165,200.00 USD per year  
**OPEN PERIOD:** Friday, July 21, 2006 to Wednesday, September 27, 2006  
**SERIES & GRADE:** ES-0340  
**POSITION INFORMATION:** Full-Time Permanent

DUTY LOCATIONS: 1 vacancy - Washington, DC

WHO MAY BE CONSIDERED: Applications will be accepted from US Citizens and Non-Citizens as allowed by appropriations and statute.

JOB SUMMARY: Come on board with us and take a journey that will challenge your mind and develop your career. The quality of our lives, the shape of our communities and the productivity of our Nation's economy depend on our transportation systems. We recognize and value the importance of our workforce and the diversity of backgrounds and ideas that each employee brings. The U.S. Department of Transportation: Careers in Motion.

The Associate Administrator and Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, is responsible for directing a program to enhance data collection, analysis, and reporting. In addition, the Associate Administrator and Director ensures the most cost-effective use of transportation monitoring resources. The Associate Administrator and Director is responsible for coordinating the collection of information with the operating administrations of the Department and with other Federal agencies. In addition, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics publishes a comprehensive set of transportation statistics on the performance and impacts of the national transportation system.

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### **DEATH OF WARREN J. MITOFSKY – INNOVATOR AND POLLING INDUSTRY STANDARD-SETTER**

The following obituary appeared in the New York Times and may be viewed at:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/03/obituaries/03mitofsky.html>

By ADAM CLYMER

Published: September 3, 2006

Warren J. Mitofsky, an innovator and standard-setter in the polling industry for four decades, died on Friday, September 1. He was 71.

The cause was an aneurysm of the aorta, said his widow, Mia Mather. Kathleen A. Frankovic, his successor as director of surveys at CBS News, said yesterday that he was “distinguished for bringing good scientific methods to media gathering of election and opinion data.”

While working at the Census Bureau in the 1960's, Mr. Mitofsky along with a colleague, Joseph Waksberg, devised a random digit dialing system that became the standard for telephone polling for many years.

Mr. Mitofsky, who lived in Manhattan, joined CBS News in 1967. Shortly thereafter, he organized the polling of voters who had just cast their ballots — known as exit polls — in a Kentucky gubernatorial election. CBS News began using that device, initially to determine demographics and issues relating to voters in subsequent elections. He conducted the first national exit poll in 1972.

Then he worked with editors at The New York Times to create a joint polling operation for the 1976 elections, one that became the model for other rival collaborations between television networks and newspapers. The New York Times and CBS News wrote the questionnaires together, but each organization chose what to highlight in its own report. CBS called it, and still does, the CBS News/New York Times Poll. The Times calls it the New York Times/CBS News Poll.

Mr. Mitofsky left CBS News in 1990 to run the Voter Research Service (which was succeeded by Voter News Service), a consortium created by the television networks to reduce the costs of conducting separate, competing election day exit polls.

In 1993 he created Mitofsky International, a polling organization that spread exit polling to many countries, including Russia and Mexico.

The last exit poll he conducted was for the Mexican presidential election on July 2. It was done for the television network Televisa, and showed the conservative candidate, Felipe Calderón, with a tiny margin over the leftist candidate, Andrés Manuel López Obrador — just as the nearly final vote tallies now indicate. But, in a recent interview published by the Pew Research Center, Mr. Mitofsky said, “We didn’t release the exact numbers from the exit poll; all we put on the air was that it was too close to call.”

That argument mirrored one that he has made frequently in defense of exit polls — that the flaws people find in them are really the result of premature leaks of incomplete data. He said the Mexican television executives were more responsible than the Americans had been in 2004 when they leaked polling data.

But in the Pew interview, he effectively conceded one flaw in the polling he had done for Voter News Service in 2004.

He told Pew that in Mexico “we did one thing that hopefully I learned from the 2004 election. We insisted in the personal training of the interviewers that they absolutely stick to the sampling rate,” so that if someone refused to be interviewed, the interviewer did not just question the next voter willing to be interviewed but followed the pattern, like going to every seventh voter.

Mr. Mitofsky was active in and a past president of two major polling organizations, the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the National Council on Public Polls. In 1999, the research association presented him with a lifetime achievement award, hailing “his continuing concern for survey quality.”

Another past president of the group, Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Center, said yesterday that Mr. Mitofsky, “set the standard for national news polls. He was very serious about what he did. He always pushed very hard for maintaining standards.”

Mr. Mitofsky, a native of the Bronx, graduated from Guilford College and did graduate work at the Universities of North Carolina and Minnesota. In addition to his widow, he is survived by a sister, Lenore Levy of Williamsport, N.Y.; a son, Bryan Mitofsky of Montpelier, Vt.; a daughter, Elisa Clancy of Hyde Park, Vt.; and four grandchildren. His son and daughter were from his first marriage to Dolores Kilgore, a marriage that ended in divorce, as did his second marriage, to Ronda Shaw.

A longtime CBS colleague, Martin Plissner, recalled yesterday how Mr. Mitofsky’s insistence on precision caused CBS to be two hours behind ABC and NBC in calling Jimmy Carter’s victory in the 1976 election.

About midnight, Mr. Plissner said, Mr. Carter had secured 265 electoral votes out of the 270 needed for election. “Then News Election Service, which was counting the hard votes, declared that Mr. Carter had carried Mississippi, which casts seven. That was enough for maestros at the other networks, but not for Warren.

“Warren knew that in Mississippi the electors were elected individually — not as a slate — and he wanted to make sure that Carter had won the five he needed — something NES couldn’t tell him. For two hours Warren and his minions worked the phones until they nailed down for sure the five votes needed to call it a night.”

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## MISSION STATEMENTS

### 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.*

### 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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