

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

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IN THIS ISSUE

A HUGE “THANK YOU”! NEW!	1
PLANNING FOR JSM 2015 NEW!	2
GSS DATA CHALLENGE 2015 NEW!	3
2014 PAT DOYLE AWARD NEW!	4
JEANNE E. GRIFFITH MENTORING AWARD NEW!	5
2014 ROGER HERRIOT AWARD WINNER NEW!	5
2015 ASA STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION NEW!	6
A HOLIDAY GIFT TO SSS AND GSS MEMBERS NEW!	7

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**UPCOMING DEADLINES AND EVENTS:**

**December 15-16**      2014 FCSM Policy Conference—Washington, DC

**February 19-21**      2015 Conference on Statistical Practice—New Orleans, LA

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A HUGE “THANK YOU”! **NEW!**

Submitted by Jill Montaquila (GSS Chair)

As my term as Chair of the GSS draws to a close, I would like to thank those who have served on the Executive Committee and GSS committees, and acknowledge all of their efforts. A special “thank you” goes to Past-Chair Lisa Blumerman, who provided invaluable guidance to me during my term. The section’s activities and business run like a well-oiled machine, thanks to all of the efforts of these Executive Committee and other committee members.

To anyone who has considered running for office in GSS or serving on a committee, I would wholeheartedly encourage you to do so! Getting involved in the Section is a great way to meet and work with colleagues, and it can be a lot of fun! If you are interested in getting involved or would like to learn more about the positions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally, thank you for the opportunity to have served as your Chair. It has truly been a pleasure!

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**PLANNING FOR JSM 2015**

**NEW!**

*Submitted by Jenny Guarino (GSS Program Chair-elect)*

**CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO CHAIR CONTRIBUTED SESSIONS**

If you are going to attend the 2015 Joint Statistical Meetings in Seattle, Washington (August 8 – 13, 2015), you are invited to volunteer as a contributed session chair for SSS- or GSS-sponsored sessions. To volunteer, please contact Jenny Guarino (GSS 2015 Program Chair, [Jenny.Guarino@dot.gov](mailto:Jenny.Guarino@dot.gov)) or Barbara Downs (SSS 2015 Program Chair, [barbara.a.downs@census.gov](mailto:barbara.a.downs@census.gov)).

**CALL TO SUBMIT CONTRIBUTED SESSION ABSTRACTS**

The 2015 GSS and SSS program chairs encourage you to organize a contributed session and submit an abstract for the 2015 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). The theme of JSM 2015 will be “Statistics: Making Better Decisions.” There are two types of contributed sessions: regular and topic-contributed. Before you submit an abstract to ASA for a topic-contributed session, please contact Jenny Guarino (GSS 2015 Program Chair) or Barbara Downs (SSS 2015 Program Chair) at the email addresses above. They will keep track of the sessions GSS or SSS may either sponsor or co-sponsor. Submission period for topic-contributed paper sessions will open on December 2, 2014 and close on January 15, 2015.

**TOPIC-CONTRIBUTED PAPER SESSIONS**

These sessions consist of a collection of contributed talks and discussions (if desired) that share a common topic. The sessions are **110 minutes in length**. There must be **five presentations (including discussants)** of 20 minutes each, with 10 minutes at the end for floor discussion and concluding remarks by the session chair.

There are three (3) format options for a Topic-Contributed paper session:

1. Five (5) papers
2. Four (4) papers and one (1) discussant
3. Three (3) papers and two (2) discussants

All speakers in a Topic-Contributed paper session **MUST** submit an abstract to the ASA office by **January 15, 2015**. On the abstract form, speakers should indicate that they are speaking in a Topic-Contributed session and provide the name of the session organizer.

### **TOPIC-CONTRIBUTED PANEL SESSIONS**

These sessions are **110 minutes in length**. The traditional panel discussion format is used, wherein a **minimum of three and a maximum of five panelists** provide commentary on a particular topic. Panels each require **ONE ABSTRACT** submitted by the organizer and received by **January 15, 2015**. As with any Topic-Contributed session, the Topic-Contributed panel organizer must coordinate efforts through the appropriate JSM Program Committee member. Submission period for topic-contributed panel sessions will open on December 2, 2014 and close on January 15, 2015.

For more information on topic-contributed sessions, refer to:

<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2015/topiccontributed.cfm>

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### **Key Dates for JSM 2015**

#### **December 2, 2014 – February 2, 2015**

Online submission of abstracts, invited posters, introductory overview lectures, topic-contributed, and contributed abstracts open.

#### **March 31, 2015 – April 16, 2015**

Online abstract editing open

#### **April 30, 2015**

Registration and housing open

#### **May 15, 2015**

Draft manuscript deadline

#### **June 1, 2015**

Early registration deadline

#### **June 2, 2015 – June 30, 2015**

Regular registration

#### **July 15, 2015**

Housing deadline

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### **GSS DATA CHALLENGE 2015**

**NEW!**

*Submitted by Wendy Martinez (GSS Chair-elect)*

The Government Statistics Section is sponsoring a Data Challenge 2015 for the JSM 2015 meetings. The contest is open to anyone who is interested in participating, including college students and professionals from the private or public sector. This contest challenges participants to analyze a public dataset using statistical and visualization tools and methods. There will be two awards in the amount of \$500 each – one for students and one for professionals. One or more topic-contributed or poster sessions at the 2015 Joint Statistical Meetings will be established for contest submissions. (Presenters are

responsible for their own JSM registration and travel costs, and any other costs associated with JSM attendance.)

The dataset for the GSS Data Challenge 2015 will be the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 tract and block Planning Databases. Contestants are free to use either or both of the planning databases in their analysis. A link to the website with the data and other useful information is given here: [http://www.census.gov/research/data/planning\\_database/2014/](http://www.census.gov/research/data/planning_database/2014/). Contestants must submit an extended abstract to Wendy Martinez ([martinez.wendy@bls.gov](mailto:martinez.wendy@bls.gov)) by December 5, 2014. Abstracts should include the following:

- General description of the proposed research
- Analytic questions to be addressed
- How the Census Planning Database will be used
- Preference for poster or presentation at the JSM 2015

Contestants will receive an email with submission instructions by December 15, 2014. Abstracts are then submitted by the contestant to the ASA for presentation at the JSM (<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2015/index.cfm>). Group submissions are acceptable.

Detailed Timeline:

December 5: Abstracts are due to Wendy Martinez ([martinez.wendy@bls.gov](mailto:martinez.wendy@bls.gov))  
December 15: Participants receive instructions on how to submit abstracts to the JSM 2015 – poster or presentation  
February 2: Last day for participants to submit their abstracts to the JSM website  
Dec to Aug 8: Participants conduct the research and analysis and prepare to present at JSM  
Aug 9 to 13: Present at JSM and entries will be judged

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2014 PAT DOYLE AWARD NEW!

Submitted by Jill Montaquila (GSS Chair)

In 2005, the Executive Committee of the Government Statistics Section (GSS) created the Pat Doyle Award as a tribute to Pat's dedication to the statistical field and the GSS during her lifetime. When Pat died, she left her imprints on an astonishingly wide range of projects and activities in the U.S. Federal statistical community. The award is given to a person who contributes to the GSS in a way that leaves a lasting impact on GSS and the American Statistical Association.

The 2014 recipient of the Pat Doyle Award is Brian Harris-Kojetin. The Section congratulates Brian and thanks him for his many contributions to GSS and to Federal statistics, including his outstanding leadership as Chair of GSS.

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**JEANNE E. GRIFFITH MENTORING AWARD    NEW!**

*Submitted by Lillian Lin (2015 Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award Committee Chair)*

Nominations are sought for the 2015 Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award. Established to encourage mentoring of junior staff in the statistical community in the Federal, State, or Local government, this recognition is awarded annually to a supervisor, technical director, team coordinator, or other member of Federal, State, or Local government statistical staff for his or her efforts in supporting the work and developing the careers of junior statisticians.

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, especially in her later 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 2015 will be accepted beginning in **January 2015**. 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 statisticians in the Federal, State, or Local statistical community in developing their careers. Nominations may be accompanied by up to six supporting letters from a supervisor and co-workers.

The last date for submission of nominations is **April 3, 2015**, and the Award Committee will make its determination of the award winner by **April 30, 2015**. The award will consist of \$1,000, a citation, and a plaque, which will be presented at a ceremony arranged by the co-sponsors in **June 2015**.

For more information about the award, including the nominating process for the 2015 award, please go to <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt> The nomination form will be available at <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/JEGform15.pdf>

If you have questions about the award, please contact Rick Peterson at [rick@amstat.org](mailto:rick@amstat.org) (703) 684-1221, or Lillian Lin at [lillian.lin@montana.edu](mailto:lillian.lin@montana.edu)

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2014 ROGER HERRIOT AWARD WINNER NEW!

Submitted by John Dixon (2014 Roger Herriot Award Committee Chair)

Roger Herriot was the Associate Commissioner of Statistical Standards and Methodology at the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) when he died in 1994. Prior to his service at NCES, he also held several positions at the U.S. Census Bureau, including Chief of the Population Division. Soon after his death, the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association (ASA) along with the Washington Statistical Society (a chapter of ASA) established the Roger Herriot

Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics. The award is intended to recognize individuals or teams who, like Roger, develop unique and innovative approaches to the solution of statistical problems in federal data collection programs.

The 2014 recipient of the Roger Herriot Award is team that produced the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) dataset. John Abowd, John Haltiwanger, and Julia Lane accomplished a remarkable feat in overcoming technical and administrative barriers which stymie many record linkage efforts today. The LEHD program combines quarterly data from State unemployment insurance (UI) records with data on individuals collected by Census Bureau household surveys (identified by a Personal Identification Key based on the individual's Social Security Number) with data on firms also collected by the Census Bureau in its business surveys and censuses (identified by their Employer Identification Number). Because of confidentiality laws at the federal level, it became necessary to negotiate with *every* State individually in order to get their support and their data — a truly massive undertaking that took nearly a decade to complete. Currently, the LEHD program has data on UI-covered jobs for 50 states and the District of Columbia, and federal worker data from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

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**2015 ASA STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION NEW!**

*Submitted by Morgan Earp (2015 Program Chair-elect)*

The Survey Research Methods, Government Statistics, and Social Statistics Sections are pleased to announce a competition for student and post-graduate papers. Winning papers are presented at the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) August 8-13, 2015 at the Washington State Convention Center, 800 Convention Place, Seattle, WA 98101. Approximately five awards will be granted. A subsidy of \$800 is provided to each winner to cover JSM 2015 expenses.

To be eligible to participate you must be a current undergraduate or graduate student at any level, or a new 2014 graduate who presents research conducted as a student. Faculty members are urged to encourage students to apply for these awards.

Papers entered in this competition must involve either a new statistical methodology or a creative application of statistical analysis to a problem, issue, or policy question pertinent to the subject area of one of the sponsoring sections. The research does not have to be complete, but competitors must be able to submit an abstract prospectus that describes the planned research and nature of the intended innovation(s).

To apply, please send the materials requested to the email addresses listed below:

- Morgan S. Earp (GSS 2015 Program Chair Elect, [Earp.Morgan@bls.gov](mailto:Earp.Morgan@bls.gov)),
- Yan Li (SRMS 2015 Program Chair Elect, [yli6@umd.edu](mailto:yli6@umd.edu)),
- Craig Hill (SSS 2015 Program Chair Elect, [chill@rti.org](mailto:chill@rti.org))

Applications must include:

1. a cover letter with the applicant's name, current affiliation and status, and contact information (address, telephone, e-mail);
2. an abstract (300 words maximum);
3. a draft paper (if available); or otherwise a 3-page research prospectus; and
4. a letter from his/her adviser that certifies the applicant's status (e.g., current student or new graduate who completed the degree within the past year), and describes plans to complete the research.

All materials must be received by **5 PM EST, December 15, 2014**. Winners will be notified by **January 15, 2015**. Students may submit papers to no more than two sections and may accept only one section's award. Students must inform both sections applied to when he or she wins and accepts an award, thereby removing the student from the award competition for the second section.

More than twelve sections of ASA sponsor Student Paper Competition/Travel Awards to assist students with travel expenses to attend JSM. Beginning in 2012, the submission dates were uniformly standardized. The submission deadline for all of the section competitions is December 15. ASA has created a portal page where students can see which sections sponsor Student Paper Competitions and links to the guidelines for each.

(<http://www.amstat.org/sections/studentpaperawards.cfm>)

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A HOLIDAY GIFT TO SSS AND GSS MEMBERS NEW!

Submitted by Rob Santos (SSS Chair)

As the holiday season approaches, we think of family, friends, and of giving. And sometimes we receive gifts. Guess what? Members of SSS and GSS will soon be receiving a very special gift. Thanks to SSS/GSS members Michael Yang and Fritz Scheuren, both the Social Statistics Section and the Government Statistics Section will receive electronic access to the catalogue of published *Proceedings of the Social Statistics Section*, covering the first twenty years of SSS published proceedings – 1958 through 1977. Overall, these proceedings contain over 1,200 papers, including about 500 survey related papers. This is a special gift because it preserves our sections' histories and can remind us that new ideas are not necessarily new – they may well have been conceived decades earlier by Section members presenting at JSM. There are many exciting sessions among these proceedings. For example, the 1968 proceedings contain a session on Replication Methods for Standard Errors in Complex Samples. The session was chaired by W. E. Deming, and the presenters included Leslie Kish, Martin Frankel, Benjamin Tepping, John Tukey, and other luminaries.

Look for this on the SSS and GSS web pages in the coming months. An announcement will be made when the publications are available. Again, we thank Michael and Fritz.

Happy holidays!

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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