



WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON
STATISTICAL
SOCIETY

September 2003

Congratulations

The balloting results are in and the following people were elected to the Board of Directors of the Washington Statistical Society:

President-elect
John Czajka

Secretary
Courtney Stapleton

Methodology Program Chair
Wendy Rotz

Representatives at Large
Tom Mule
Jennifer Guarino

A round of applause goes to the following individuals who were recently elected Fellows of the American Statistical Society (ASA). This honor goes to:

Lee R. Abramson, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mary K. Batchler, Ernst & Young LLP
John L. Czajka, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
James Filliben, National Institute of Standards and Technology
Carol C. House, National Agricultural Statistics Service
Marilyn M. Seastrom, National Center for Education Statistics
Nancy L. Spruill, Office of the Secretary of Defense
Alan R. Tupek, U.S. Census Bureau

WSS and Other Seminars (All events are open to any interested persons)	
September 16 Tues.	MASSC: A new data mask for limiting statistical information loss and disclosure
17 Wed.	Preserving Quality and Confidentiality of Tabular Data
October 14 Tues.	Morris Hansen Lecture: New Methods for Estimating and Analyzing Measurement Error in Surveys
16 Thurs.	The Role of Statistics in Achieving the Dream

Also available on the World Wide Web at the following URL: <http://www.science.gmu.edu/~wss>

Announcements

Washington Statistical Society Curtis Jacobs Memorial Prize for Outstanding Survey Statistics Project, 2003

On Tuesday, June 3, the Washington Statistical Society (WSS) held the judging of its annual Curtis Jacobs Memorial Prize for Washington, D.C. area high school and middle school participants. The total entries from this year are increased dramatically from the last year. The prize includes a \$200 saving bond to the winning team, a plaque to the advisor teacher, and a one-year free American Statistical Association membership to the school. The winner and the teacher are also invited to the WSS annual dinner.

The winner from high school is:
Project Title: *Economic Circumstance and Choice of Colleges*
By: Ina Hwang
Statistics teacher: Ricki Cohn
School: Walter Johnson High School
Bethesda, Maryland

The winner team from middle school is vacant this year.

The Curtis Jacob Award committee would like to thank the following people who volunteered to judge the entries. Their help are greatly appreciated! They are:

Wendy Rotz, QUEST, Ernst & Young LLP
Sunghee Lee, JPSM, University of Maryland
Amy Luo, Quest, Ernst & Young LLP
William Wong, IRS

Notice about Seminars at the Bureau of Labor Statistics

A new list of attendees of WSS seminars at the Bureau of Labor Statistics began July 1, 2003. If you plan to attend a seminar at BLS, you need to do one of the following at least by noon 2 days ahead: (1) (preferred method) e-mail name, affiliation, and name of seminar to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') or (2) call 202-691-7524 and leave a message with this information. Finally, bring a photo ID. If you have a problem, e-mail John Dixon at dixon_j@bls.gov or phone him at 202-691-7516. This list will be in effect for seminars through September 26, 2003.

Latest Metropolitan-Micropolitan Areas Definitions from OMB

OMB Designates 49 New Metropolitan Statistical Areas

On June 9, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget released the list of revised definitions of Metropolitan Areas, and new definitions of Micropolitan and Combined Statistical Areas. The list of areas can be obtained by going to: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/> Go to "Bulletins" (on the left hand side of the page under "Information for Agencies") and then at the bottom of the announcement, Bulletin 03-04, there is the link to the PDF Attachment.

A full text of the short press release (2003-18) can be found on the OMB web site at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/pubpress/index.html>

COPAFS will host a one day seminar on November 4, 2003, to assess the impact of the new areas on the public and private sectors.

Program Abstract

- Title:** **MASSC: A new data mask for limiting statistical information loss and disclosure**
- Speaker:** Avi Singh
RTI International
- Discussant:** Fritz Scheuren, National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago
- Chair:** Sameena Salvucci, Synectics for Management Decisions, Inc.
- Date:** Tuesday, September 16, 2003, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Postal Square Building (PSB), Conference Center, 2 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. Please use the First Street entrance to the PSB. Use the Red Line to Union Station. To gain entrance to BLS, please see the Notice at the end of this announcement.
- Sponsor:** Data Collection Methods Section, WSS
- Abstract:** We propose a method termed 'MASSC' for statistical disclosure limitation (SDL) of categorical or continuous micro data, while limiting the information loss in the treated database defined in a suitable sense. The new SDL methodology exploits the analogy between (1) taking a sample (instead of a census,) along with some adjustments via imputation for missing information, and (2) releasing a subset, instead of the original data set, along with some adjustments via perturbation for records still at disclosure risk. Survey sampling reduces monetary cost in comparison to a census, but entails some loss of information. Similarly, releasing a subset reduces disclosure cost in comparison to the full database, but entails some loss of information. Thus, optimal survey sampling methods for minimizing cost subject to bias and precision constraints can be used for SDL in providing simultaneous control on disclosure cost and information loss. The method consists of steps of Micro Agglomeration for partitioning the database into risk strata, optimal probabilistic Substitution for perturbation, optimal probabilistic Subsampling for suppression, and optimal sampling weight Calibration for preserving estimates for key outcomes in the treated database.

The proposed method uses a paradigm shift in the practice of disclosure limitation in that the original database itself is viewed as the population and the problem of disclosure by inside intruders is considered. (Inside intruders know the presence of their targets in the database in contrast to outside intruders.) This new framework has two main features: one, it focuses on the more difficult problem of protecting from inside intruders and as a result also protects against outside intruders, and second, it provides in a suitable sense model-free measures of both information loss and disclosure risk when disclosure treatment is performed by employing known random selection mechanisms for substitution and subsampling. Empirical results are presented to illustrate computation of measures of information loss and the associated disclosure risk for a small data set.

Notice about Seminars at the Bureau of Labor Statistics

A new list of attendees of WSS seminars at the Bureau of Labor Statistics began July 1, 2003 (the previous list was discarded). If you plan to attend a seminar at BLS after this date, you will need to do one of the following at least by noon 1 day ahead: (1) e-mail name, affiliation, and name of seminar to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') or (2) call 202-691-7524 and leave a message with this information. Finally, bring a photo ID. NOTE: This list is in effect for seminars through September 26, 2003.

Program Announcement

Paul Biemer to Present Morris Hansen Lecture On Oct. 14

Paul Biemer, an RTI Distinguished Fellow, will present the 2003 Morris Hansen Lecture at a special gathering of the Washington Statistical Society (WSS) on Oct. 14 in Washington, D.C. Additionally, his presentation and the comments of the discussants will be published in a forthcoming issue of the Journal of Official Statistics.

Through a series of presentations by experts in the field of survey methodology, the annual Morris Hansen Lectures honor the contributions of Morris Hansen, whose work established many of the standards and methods used in survey sampling today. The WSS is composed of nearly 1,000 members, making it the largest chapter of the American Statistical Association (ASA).

The topic of Dr. Biemer's presentation, which will be given in the Jefferson Auditorium at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will be new methods for estimating and analyzing measurement error in surveys.

Dr. Biemer has more than 24 years of postdoctoral experience in survey methods and statistics. In addition to being an RTI Distinguished Fellow, he holds a joint appointment as Associate Director for Survey Research at the Howard D. Odum Institute for Research in Social Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Biemer's accomplishments include leading the development of a methodology for computer audio recorded interviewing (CARI), which is being tested for use by the Census Bureau for its demographic surveys. In addition, based on his work with nonsampling errors, in 2001, he was called to serve as an expert witness on statistical methodology by the Congressional Committee on Energy and Commerce as part of the investigation of the Voter News Service following the 2000 presidential election miscalls in Florida. He is currently involved in the development of methods for evaluating the quality of survey data using latent class analysis.

Program Announcement

The Role of Statistics in Achieving the Dream

On October 16, 2003, there will be a 40th anniversary Washington Statistical Society (WSS) session honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., entitled "The Role of Statistics in Achieving the Dream."

A panel format will be used with speakers who are statisticians and demographers, mixed together with civil rights activists. Some of you who read this were on the Mall on August 28, 1963. Please come and share. And if you were not there, come and feel the sense of excitement and hope that existed then. Learn how statistics has played a role at nearly every juncture in leading to progress.

But there is still a long road ahead and much more for statisticians to do in achieving true equality of opportunity. It is safe to say that few of those attending the March on Washington that day would have predicted what happened in the 40 years since. Progress has been slower than hoped but the dream has also been broadened with many legislative, social, and economic accomplishments.

The October 16 session will begin at 12:30 pm and run until about 2:30pm. The location is the BLS Conference Center, 2 Postal Square Building, across from Union Station. To gain admittance you must call at least two days ahead to Kevin Cecco at 202-874-0464. Because this is a special occasion there will be light refreshments offered.

Letter from the President

I am honored to serve as WSS President for the next year. I believe that the WSS is the pre-eminent local statistical organization in the world. We do a wonderful job of supporting both our profession and our professionals. Our multiple sessions per month are an excellent opportunity to learn better methods and to meet other statisticians. This could not be accomplished without the incredible amount of volunteer hours put in by the Board and other members. Video-conferencing our talks has increased the number of people who participate, but unfortunately has reduced the number who are actually present at the talks. I would urge everyone to try and attend a few of them in person each year, to meet others and to support the presenters.

My hope this year is to "Expand our Influence." Statisticians in the Washington area do a wonderful job of talking to each other. Unfortunately, we often get frustrated when we see decisions being made that do not make proper use of statistics. Obviously some of this is a result of political trade-offs, but often it is a case of their not being a statistician at the table when decisions are made. I hope we will have a few opportunities this year to expand our influence to reach those who do make the decisions. Here are two examples to look forward to this fall:

In October we will have a session on "How Statisticians have helped Achieve the Dream." This will celebrate 40 years since Martin Luther King's I Have a Dream speech, and will focus on how statistics have helped to change this country.

In December we will have our 6th QA in Government Symposium. The keynote speaker will explain how European statistical organizations have gotten senior executives to use statistics to improve quality. We will also have a talk about how the private sector has integrated statistical methods for quality into their decisions. A panel of Directors of US statistical organizations will then discuss why these methods are important.

I hope to see you at one or both of these sessions this fall. If you have additional ideas on how we can "Expand our Influence" please let me know.

David Marker

Letter from the Past President

I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve as President of the Washington Statistical Society (WSS) during the busy and productive year 2002-2003. At the open meeting of the WSS Board on June 24, I passed the gavel to David Marker who served as president-elect this past year.

In his letter to you last year, Andy White, now the Outgoing Past President, took note of the many lives lost due to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Andy predicted that, "One of the most important ways the nation can prevent future attacks of this magnitude is by developing and using more accurate information. I believe that statisticians will ultimately play an important role in these activities."

WSS member, David Banks, stepped up to the plate on this need by organizing a November 2002 Workshop on Statistical Issues for Counterterrorism in Federal Agencies so that federal statisticians could discuss ways in which statistical efforts across different agencies could support the war on terrorism. The high degree of interest generated there led to his decision to organize a May 2003 conference on Statistical Issues in Counterterrorism, with the able assistance of John Dixon, Nancy Spruill, Pat Doyle, and Doug Samuelson.

Election Results

Before going on to discuss the other exciting events of this year, I should discuss election results. Our election was not as chaotic as last year but we still experienced glitches that had to be resolved. Congratulations to these new officers of the WSS for 2003-2004:

- President-Elect: John Czajka, Mathematica Policy Research
- Secretary: Courtney Stapleton, Bureau of the Census
- Methodology Chair: Wendy Rotz, Ernst & Young
- Representatives-at-large: Tom Mule, Bureau of the Census and Jennifer Guarino, RTI International.

Volunteer Activity

Currently WSS has 882 ASA members and 49 non-ASA for a total of 931 members—a slight decline from last year. Our Membership Committee, under the leadership of chair Renee Miller, is implementing approaches to recruit new members, but all WSS members should encourage friends and co-workers to join the WSS. Membership dues are modest.

Our program chairs organized 31 seminars this past year. We also advertised and cosponsored countless other local events of interest. I would like to recognize our program chairs and the outstanding work they have performed:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources—Dan Beckler and Mel Kollander
- Data Collection Methods—Jonaki Bose and Sameena Salvucci
- Economics—Linda Atkinson and Authur Kennickell
- Methodology—Mary Batcher and Pat Cantwell
- Social & Demographic Statistics—Manuel de la Puerte and Judy Droitcour
- Statistical Computing—Robert Sands, Charlie Hallahan, and Dean Judson
- Quality Assurance & Physical Sciences—Amrut Champaneri and Eugene Burns

I also want to thank the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for hosting the meetings. John Dixon and Stuart Scott have served as our liaison to BLS in these security conscious days. John Dixon has also been handling the video conferencing. We had 21 seminars that were video-conferenced this year.

Three short courses were organized this year under the leadership of Robin Lee who is stepping down after having ably served in this role for four WSS Presidents.

This year we were approached by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to be a cosponsor of their biannual Symposium on Statistical Methods. The first symposium we cosponsored was held in January 2003 in Atlanta. The next will be held in Washington, DC in 2005. Many thanks to David Marker for setting up this arrangement. David is also working with Glenn White in setting up a two-day Quality Assurance Conference in December.

This year the Hansen Lecture Series had its first panel discussion. The panelists were Eleanor Singer, Norman Bradburn, and Katherine Wallman. Thanks to Westat for funding that makes this lecture series possible and to committee members Nancy Kirkendall, Ginny de Wolf, Nat Schenker, Bob Groves, and Joe Waksberg.

Michael P. Cohen and Vince Massimini have coordinated our relationship with the Washington Academy of Sciences. Next year we will be participating in the annual meeting of the Academy.

We continue to have an active Quantitative Literacy Program, thanks to the many WSS volunteers who support this important service to our community. Wendy Rotz and Reza Modarres coordinated WSS effort to institute a new award for the best student presentation at Probability and Statistics Day. Carolyn Carol organized our second annual career day. Amy Luo and Sung Hee Lee increased interest in the Curtis Jacobs competition this year. For the second year, WSS awarded a local award in the Poster Competition, now expanded to K-12, under the leadership of Archana Joshee and Ryan Petska. We had three winning posters in the 10-12 grades and one in the 4-6 grades for this year's local Statistical Poster Competition.

For Grades 10-12:

- First Place: "Do Women Smoke More Than Men?" By: Allison Kendrick, Katie Riley, Matt Hulse, and Mike Cordingley; Oakton High School, Vienna, VA
- Second Place: "Is the Presidential Election More Attractive than the Mid-term Election?" By: Jiahui Li, Oakton High School, Vienna, VA
- Third Place: "Is there a Relationship Between Energy Orientation and House Pet Preference Among High School Seniors" By: Lien Kratzke, Oakton High School, Vienna, VA

For Grades 4-6:

First Place: "Has the Bluebird Population at Bear Branch Nature Center Increased?" By: Nick Bitzel, Alex Bitzel, and George Robertson, E.O.O. Homeschool Group, Hampstead, MD

Judges were supplied for local science fairs again this year. Thanks to Lee Abramson.

We continue to have an outstanding team making electronic services possible. Our monthly calendar, email announcements, and website continue to be immensely helpful in operating the society. Thanks to Michael Greene, Dan Jacobs, and Vince Massimini.

Michael Feil has continued his exceptional work as newsletter editor. Anne Peterson coordinated employment ads for the newsletter.

WSS has many interactions with the national office, typically through Nancy Hiett, ASA's Chapter liaison. Glenn White and Carolee Bush, as Council Representative and as Vice Chair for our district, have done outstanding work in keeping communication flowing between ASA and WSS to meet ASA information needs and WSS service requests.

This year's officers have been willing and active volunteers. Past President Andy White, President-Elect David Marker, Secretary Tom Mule, Treasurer Erin Whitworth Dyal, and Representatives-at-Large Daniel Cork, Renee Miller, Jeri Mulrow, and Jill Montaquila have all contributed to enabling WSS to provide the diverse services our members desire. Jeri Mulrow, as Social Arrangements Chair, has coordinated three outstanding social events including the holiday mixer, the annual dinner, and the presidential invited seminar.

WSS could not function without these dedicated volunteers! WSS always needs more individuals to help. Consider volunteering your services to give a talk, present a short course, serve on a committee, judge a QL and Science Fair event, or other service activity.

Awards

At the Annual Dinner the following individuals were honored with a President's Award for service to the WSS:

- *David Banks*--For outstanding work for the ASA Fellows Committee and for leadership of the Workshop on Statistics in Counterterrorism and the Conference on Federal Statistical Issues in Counterterrorism
- *John Dixon*--For outstanding work for the Membership Committee, for the Videoconferencing of WSS Presentations, and for implementation of the Conference on Statistical Issues in Counterterrorism
- *Renee Miller*--For outstanding work for the Membership Committee and as Representative at Large
- *Lee Abramson*--For sustained service as Science Fair Coordinator
- *Wendy Rotz*--For sustained service as Quantitative Literacy Chair
- *David Marker*--For coordinating WSS Co-Sponsorship of the CDC Symposium on Statistical Methods

The *Past President's Certificate* was awarded to *Andy White* for his service over the past three years to WSS. I have found his guidance invaluable.

Other awards given at the Annual Meetings are as follows.

Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award. Rich Allen of the National Agricultural Statistics Service is this year's recipient of the Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award for his "gentle" guidance of the careers of junior staff.

Julius Shiskin Award --WSS co-sponsors this award with ASA's Business and Economics Section and the National Association of Business Economists. Rich Allen and Catherine Hood are the WSS representatives on this committee. Carol Corrado and Susan Offutt were winners this year.

Roger Herriott Award for Innovations in Statistics --WSS, together with the Social Statistics and the Government Statistics Sections of the ASA, presented the award to Daniel Weinberg at the 2002 Joint Statistical Meetings in New York City.

Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Award --WSS, together with the Section on Government Statistics and other sponsors, announced that Yun Li of Bowling Green State University is the 2003 recipient of the Wray Smith Scholarship Award, which is awarded annually to an outstanding applicant to further his or her career in government statistics.

The *Curtis Jacobs Memorial Committee* announced that Ina Hwang of Walter Johnson High School in Bethesda, Maryland was the 2003 winner for her paper on "Economic Circumstance and Choice of Colleges."

The WSS Fellows Committee, composed of David Banks, Phil Kott, Michael L. Cohen, and Fritz Scheuren, reported that eight WSS members were elected as new *ASA Fellows*:

- Al Tupek
- Lee Abramson
- James Filliben
- Nancy Spruill
- Carol House
- Marilyn McMillen Seastrom
- John Czajka
- Mary Batcher

The following graduate students were awarded *WSS Outstanding Graduate Student Awards*:

- Weiping Deng, George Washington University
- Nataliya Kravets, Catholic University
- Sung Hee Lee, JPSM
- Neil Perkins, American University
- Haixia Xu, George Mason University.

Finally, the *Gertrude M. Cox Statistics Award* was instituted this year. The annual award will recognize a statistician making significant contribution to statistical practice. Awardees will be given a \$1,000 honorarium and will be an invited speaker at the annual dinner. RTI International is providing funding for this award. The Cox Award Committee will determine the recipients, with Kerrie Boyle, Dick Kulka, Paul Biemer, David Marker, Andy White, and Brenda Cox as members this year. This year's winner of the Gertrude M. Cox Statistics Award is Sharon Lohr, Professor of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Arizona State University. Her current research areas include sample surveys, design of experiments, robust estimation, and applications of statistics to law. Her book "Sampling: Design and Analysis" (translated into Spanish) is used in statistics classes throughout North and Central America, and she has given several workshops on modern survey sampling theory and practice. She was elected Fellow of the American Statistical Association in 2000, "for development of methodology, innovative teaching methods and materials for survey sampling, and for statistical consulting and applications in criminology and law." She is currently chair-elect of the Survey Research Methods Section of the American Statistical Association and a member of the Census Advisory Committee of Professional Associations.

Many thanks to WSS members for the opportunity to serve as President of the Washington Statistical Society.

Brenda G. Cox, Past President

COPAFS Session

New Metropolitan - Micropolitan Areas
Implications for Statistical and Policy Decision Making

Date and Time

November 4, 2003
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Embassy Suites, Alexandria, VA

Hosted by the

Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS)

Session Topics:

What We Have and Why
Using the New Classifications at the National Level
Regional Uses of the New Classifications
Where Do We Go From Here?

Cost: \$95.00 for the seminar payable by purchase order or check made to COPAFS.
Limit: 150 participants

For a registration form or for more information, contact the COPAFS office: 703/836-0404 or by email at copafs@aol.com.

Note from the WSS NEWS Editor

Items for publication in the November WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than September 30, 2003.
E-mail items to Michael Feil at michael.feil@usda.gov.

**Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (BTS)
Confidentiality Seminar Series**

The September BTS confidentiality seminar is listed below. The seminars in this series are open to all. Please direct questions to Neil Russell (neil.russell@bts.gov)

September Seminar

- Title:** Preserving Quality and Confidentiality of Tabular Data
- Presenter:** Lawrence H. Cox, Associate Director, National Center for Health Statistics
- Date/Time:** Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2003, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
- Location:** US Department of Transportation, Nassif Building, 400 7th St., SW, Room 8240 (See Notice at the end of this announcement.)
- Abstract:** Standard methods for statistical disclosure limitation (SDL) in tabular data either abbreviate, modify or suppress from publication the *true* (original) values of tabular cells. All of these methods are based on satisfying an analytical rule selected by the statistical office to distinguish cells and cell combinations exhibiting unacceptable risk of disclosure (the *sensitive cells*) from those that do not. The impact of these SDL methods on data analytic outcomes is not well-studied but can be shown to be subtle or severe in particular cases. Dandekar and Cox (2002) introduced a method for tabular SDL called *controlled tabular adjustment* (CTA). CTA replaces the value of each cell failing the analytical rule by a *safe value*, viz., a value satisfying the rule, and then uses linear programming to adjust the values of the nonsensitive cells to restore additivity of detail to totals throughout the tabular system. The linear programming framework allows adjustments to be selected so as to minimize any of a variety of linear measures of overall distortion to the data, e.g., total of absolute adjustments, total percent of absolute adjustments, etc. Cox and Dandekar (2003) provide further techniques for preserving data quality. While worthwhile, none of these techniques directly addresses the overarching issue: Will statistical analysis of original and disclosure limited data sets yield comparable results? We provide a mathematical programming framework and algorithms, introduced in Cox and Kelly (2003), that begins to address this issue. Specifically, we demonstrate how to preserve approximately mean values, variances and correlations when original data are subjected to CTA, and how to ensure approximately intercept=zero, slope=one simple linear regression between original and adjusted data.

Notice about BTS Confidentiality Series Seminars

The Department of Transportation's Nassif Building, 400 7th St., SW, Washington, DC, is located at the L'Enfant Plaza Metro Stop (follow signs to the Department of Transportation exit at 7th and D Streets, SW). All visitors should enter at the Southwest entrance. Please bring a photo ID (federal employees must have federal ID). Procedures differ depending on the employer:

1. For federal employees: Please show your federal ID to the guard at the Southwest entrance, go through security, and then proceed to the seminar room (the first number indicates the floor on which the conference room is located).
2. For non-federal employees: DOT security procedures require BTS to provide a list of attendees who are not federal employees prior to the seminar. Therefore, if you plan to attend the seminar and are not employed by the federal government, please provide your name, name of employer, and phone number to Neil Russell (neil.russell@bts.gov) COB one week prior to the seminar (by Thursday, Sept. 11th). On the day of the seminar, please report to the Southwest entrance of the Nassif Building 15 minutes before the start of the seminar so that you can be escorted to the seminar room.

Advance Symposium Announcement

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE GOVERNMENT SYMPOSIUM

December 9 and 10, 2003
Sponsored by
The Washington Statistical Society

Holiday Inn, Rosslyn at Key Bridge
1900 North Fort Meyer Drive in Arlington, VA 22209

Symposium Objective

The Washington Statistical Society is pleased to announce the sixth **Quality Assurance in the Government Symposium**. This symposium picks up with Quality Assurance where the very successful 1988 through 1992 symposia left off. The objectives of this symposium are to provide a basic introduction/update to quality assurance principles, to illustrate through case studies practical applications of these principles, and to address policy and organizational issues associated with quality assurance. The symposium will be held December 9 and 10, 2003.

Lars Lyberg of Statistics Sweden will give the keynote address on 'How European National Statistical Organizations are Continuously Improving Their Quality.' Other program highlights include a panel of agency administrators to discuss 'Why Care About Quality Statistics,' luncheon sessions to provide insights into Six Sigma and Exploiting Technology for Improving Measurement, and a general session on the Government Performance and Results Act with current agency success stories. There will be concurrent sessions covering a variety of topics including sampling, cognitive testing, standards for data quality, quality in graphical displays of data, technology, and statistical consulting.

Location and Metro Service

The Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge is located at 1900 North Fort Meyer Drive in Arlington, VA. Complimentary parking is available for all vehicles. Complimentary indoor parking is available for passenger vehicles only due to height restrictions.

The Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge is located one block from the Rosslyn Metro Station served by the Blue and Orange Lines.

Registration Information

The registration fees will be \$225 for members of WSS, ASA, ASQC; \$275 for non-members; and \$100 for full-time students with ID. Registration includes a copy of the Proceedings available at the symposium, continental breakfasts, buffet luncheons, and a reception. Early registration is strongly recommended. Look for registration forms and program details in the October and November 2003 WSS Newsletters, and in an October 2003 brochure mailed to WSS members. If you are not a WSS member and would like an electronic announcement please e-mail Glenn White at glenn.white@ey.com.

Accommodations

Participants must make their own overnight accommodations. If you use the Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge mention that you are attending the symposium to obtain priority consideration.

Employment

As a service to local statisticians, *WSS News* provides notification of employment opportunities and description of those seeking employment here in the Washington, DC, area. Readers are encouraged to take advantage of this feature of the newsletter. The deadline for inserting notices is five (5) weeks before the publication date. Those interested should email or call Anne Peterson, at apeterson.ipr@verizon.net or (703) 979-1191.

Postdoctoral Position in Epidemiological Methods at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

The Epidemiology Branch is an intramural research program within the Division of Epidemiology, Statistics and Prevention Research at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. It actively conducts research within the domain of human reproduction, pregnancy, infant and child health. The Branch is currently recruiting a post-doctoral fellow interested in methodology and exposure assessment. Research areas include, but not limited to, the development of methods in causality, ROC analysis, and measurement error. The fellow will work closely with a Branch scientist and also be encouraged to develop his/her own research track. The candidate must have a PhD or MD degree and less than five years post-doctoral research experience. Preference will be given to candidates with an interest in methods in: (1) reproductive epidemiology research in the above fields, or (2) research aiming to improve exposure assessment. Applicants should send a curriculum vitae, a statement of research interests, and three letters of reference to:

Dr. Germaine Buck
Chief
Epidemiology Branch
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
National Institutes of Health
Building 6100, Room 7B03
Bethesda, MD 20892

For inquiry, please contact:

Dr. Enrique F. Schisterman
Epidemiology Branch
NICHD/NIH
Tel: 301-435-6893
Email: schistee@nih.gov

This position will be open till it is filled.

The National Institutes of Health is an equal opportunity employer.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY, ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM (ATP), ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OFFICE (EAO), SUPERVISORY POSITION (LEVEL 4/5: GS-14-15)

The ATP partners with the private sector to accelerate the development of high-risk technology development that has broad based benefits for society. EAO evaluates the ATP using surveys, econometric studies, cost-benefit studies, and policy analysis, and disseminates findings in reports, factsheets, seminars, and conference presentations. These evaluations are conducted by EAO staff and contractors from universities and research organizations. (See http://www.atp.nist.gov/eao/eao_main.htm)

This is a supervisory position that manages a staff of economists and statisticians that primarily oversees the collection, processing and analysis of the EAO Business Reporting System (BRS). The data are used both cross-sectionally and longitudinally in economic studies, descriptive analysis, and as performance measures. An ideal candidate will have survey, economic analysis, and business experience, and ability to manage large contracts. Masters/MBA/PHD preferred. NIST is an EEO employer.

If interested, please send CV and short writing sample to Stephanie Shipp, Director, EAO, 100 Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-4710, or email to Stephanie.Shipp@nist.gov

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

DISCLOSURE LIMITATION RESEARCH POSITION

Applications and nominations are invited for one permanent position in the Statistical Research Division at the U.S. Census Bureau in the Washington, D.C. area. This position is an integral part of a research program aimed at identifying, testing, and implementing statistical disclosure control strategies, in order to effectively protect the confidentiality of survey and census participants. The principal duties include the development of statistical approaches and computational algorithms to identify disclosure risk. The development of data retrieval and data integration approaches will be a key component of the work. These approaches must be incorporated in easy-to-use software. Other responsibilities include data analysis, documentation, and the presentation of results in scientific journals and at meetings.

Requirements: At least a masters degree in a relevant field such as Statistics, Mathematics, or Computer Science. Experience in computer programming including knowledge of Java, C++, or C is required. Must be able to create and design user-friendly software. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills are necessary. The salary range is \$46,175 to \$73,546 depending on qualifications and experience. U.S. citizenship is required.

For further information or to start the application process for this position in Disclosure Limitation, apply online at <http://www.census.gov/hrd/www/vacancy/nmaths12.html>. Follow the instructions for electronic applications, and submit your resume and transcripts to 1-800-601-8952. If you have questions, please contact the Census Bureau's Recruitment Branch at 1-800-638-6719.

The Census Bureau Is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Last Minute Announcements

SIGSTAT Topics for Fall 2003

October 15, 2003: PROC MIXED - Part 1: Introduction to Longitudinal Data Analysis (<http://www.sas.com>)

This session will be the first of several sessions showing how PROC MIXED in SAS/STAT can be used to estimate longitudinal data models. Longitudinal data consists of observations measured not only over individual subjects, but there are repeated observations per subject, usually over time, but also allowing for repeated observations over space. The material covered will be extracted from a 3-day course on the topic taught by SAS Institute. This first session on this topic features exploratory data analysis applied to a data set with unequally-spaced observations per subject. This example will be used throughout the other sessions on the topic.

November 12, 2003: Code Portability: SAS Data step in DBMS/Copy - using it as a SAS Work-Alike

Many SAS users own Conceptual Software's DBMS/COPY, a widely used utility for transferring data between software packages. Conceptual's software product lines have been acquired by DataFlux [a subsidiary of SAS Institute] in October of 2002. DBMS/Copy includes database manipulation and programming system, loosely referred to as DBMS/Analyst or Program. The module Program provides functionality resembling that of base

SAS software DATA step. Equivalents of summarization and other procedures MEANS / SUMMARY, TABULATE and SORT are also explained. This talk is a "Primer" on running SAS DATA step code with minimal change in the DBMS environment. Users do not have to translate their SAS code to some database {e.g. Access}, or, to a 3G language like Fortran or C, when / where SAS is not available, just port it to DBMS/Copy.

Yesvy Gustasp gives the presentation.

December 10: PROC MIXED - Part 2: The General Linear Mixed Model & Evaluating Covariance Structures (<http://www.sas.com>)

Continuing the topic from October, we'll discuss the general linear mixed model and how it is specified in PROC MIXED. In particular, the options specifying the covariance structures appropriate for longitudinal models will be covered. The sample variogram is defined and used as a diagnostic tool for selecting a covariance structure. Finally, goodness-of-fit statistics for the selected covariance structure will be calculated and plotted.

SIGSTAT is the Special Interest Group in Statistics for the CPCUG, the Capital PC User Group, and WINFORMS, the Washington Institute for Operations Research Service and Management Science. All meetings are in Room S3031, 1800 M St, NW from 12:30 to 1:30. Enter the South Tower & take the elevator to the 3rd floor to check in at the guard's desk. First-time attendees should contact Charlie Hallahan, 202-694-5051, hallahan@ers.usda.gov, and leave their name. Directions to the building & many links of statistical interest can be found at the SIGSTAT website, <http://www.cpcug.org/user/sigstat/>.



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Late Announcements

HAS STATISTICS A FUTURE? IF SO, IN WHAT FORM?

C.R. RAO

Emeritus Eberly Professor of Statistics
Director, Center for Multivariate Analysis
Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802
E-mail: crr1@psu.edu
September 18, 2003 (3:30-5PM) - 1524 Van Munching Hall , the Howard Frank Auditorium

A reception will be held afterwards from 4:40 - 6:00 PM. Food and drinks will be served.

The mathematical foundations of statistics as a separate discipline were laid by Fisher, Neyman and Wald during the second quarter of the last century. Subsequent research in statistics and the courses taught in the universities are mostly based on the guidelines set by these pioneers. Statistics is used in some form or other in all areas of human endeavor from scientific research to optimum use of resources for social welfare, prediction and decision-making. However, there are controversies in statistics, especially in the choice of a model for data, use of prior probabilities, especially quantifying uncertainty in decision making and subject-matter judgments by experts. The same data analyzed by different consulting statisticians usually lead to different conclusions. What is the future of statistics in the present millennium dominated by information technology encompassing the whole of communications, interaction with intelligent systems, massive data bases, and complex information processing networks? The current statistical methodology based on simple probabilistic models developed for the analysis of small data sets appears to be inadequate to meet the needs of customers for quick on line processing of data and making the information available for practical use. Some methods are being put forward in the name of data mining for such purposes. A broad review of the current state of the art in statistics, its merits and demerits, and possible future developments will be presented.

FCSM 2003 Conference

The Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology's (FCSM) 2003 Research Conference will be held November 17-19 at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia. The conference will feature a plenary address by Colm O'Muircheartaigh and focus on a wide range of current research and methodological topics relevant to federal government statistical programs. For a copy of the advance program and more information about the conference, please refer to <http://www.fcsm.gov/events/#upcoming>.