



# WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON  
STATISTICAL  
SOCIETY

February 2006

## HERRIOT AWARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Nominations are sought for the 2006 Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics. The award is intended to reflect the special characteristics that marked Roger Herriot's career:

- 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 at all levels within Federal agencies, other government organizations, nonprofits, the private sector, and the academic community may be nominated on the basis of their contributions.

The recipient of the 2006 Roger Herriot Award will be chosen by a committee comprising representatives of the Social Statistics Section and Government Statistics Section of the American Statistical Association and the Washington Statistical Society. Roger Herriot was associated with and strongly supportive of these organizations during his career. The award consists of an honorarium and a framed citation.

Joseph Waksberg (Westat), Monroe Sirken (National Center for Health Statistics), Constance Citro (National Academy of Sciences), Roderick Harrison (U.S. Census Bureau), 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), and Robert E. Fay III (U.S. Census Bureau) are previous recipients of the Roger Herriot Award.

For more information, contact Lawrence Cox, Chair, Roger Herriot Award Committee, 301 458-4631 or [LCox@CDC.Gov](mailto:LCox@CDC.Gov). There are no fixed requirements for the contents or format of nomination packages, but completed packages must be received by May 1, 2006. Electronic submissions to Dr. Cox in MS-Word or PDF format are encouraged.

Alternately, nominations may be mailed to:

Lawrence H. Cox  
National Center for Health Statistics  
3311 Toledo Road, Room 3211  
Hyattsville, MD 20782

<b>WSS and Other Seminars</b> (All events are open to any interested persons)	
<b>February</b> <b>22</b> <b>Wed.</b>	<b>Indirect Monetary Incentives with a Complex Agricultural Establishment Survey</b>
<b>March</b> <b>28</b> <b>Tues.</b>	<b>Estimating Drug Use Prevalence Using Latent Class Models with Item Count Response as One of the Indicators</b>

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

## **Announcements**

### **THE JEANNE E. GRIFFITH MENTORING AWARD**

On receiving the Roger Herriot Award in June 2001, Jeanne E. Griffith said:

One of the most rewarding aspects (of Federal statistics) for me was the opportunity to promote creative activities and energies among my staff...When I have had the blessing to mentor young people in their careers, I have tried to emphasize.....(that) only they, themselves, can make the most of the)...chances that life presents.

Dr. Griffith 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.

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award has been established to encourage mentoring of younger staff in the Federal statistical system. It is presented annually, beginning in 2003, to a supervisor who is nominated by co-workers and supervisors, and chosen by the Award Selection Committee.

The award is co-sponsored by the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, the Council for Excellence in Government, the Washington Statistical Society, the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association, and the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics.

Nominations for 2006 will be accepted beginning in February 2006. The last date for submission of nominations is March 31, 2006, and the Award Committee will make its determination of the award winner by May 1, 2006. The award will consist of a \$1000 honorarium and a citation, which will be presented at a ceremony arranged by the co-sponsors in June 2006.

The winning mentor will be selected for his or her efforts in supporting the work and developing the careers of younger staff. Examples of typical mentoring activities include:

- Advising junior staff to help them create career opportunities, networking skills, and contacts for growth and development;

- Counseling junior staff and providing resources to help develop their technical writing, analysis, presentation and organizational skills and knowledge;
- Encouraging junior staff growth and career development through attendance and oral presentations at meetings with higher level officials, staffs of other agencies, professional associations, training courses, and conferences;
- Motivating junior staff and building self confidence through feedback on their efforts, being a listener when that is needed, and creating a caring and supportive environment;
- Serving as a role model for junior staff through professional expertise, information and insights, balancing collegial and personal roles, and including everyone across rank, race, ethnicity, and seniority.

For further information on the award, contact Ed Spar, Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS) by phone: 703-836-0404; fax: 703-684-3410; or by e-mail at [copafs@aol.com](mailto:copafs@aol.com). The nomination cover sheet and guidelines form-or a photocopy of it-should be attached to a nomination memorandum or letter. Forms can be obtained by contacting Ed Spar, or by downloading from the COPAFS website at <http://www.copafs.org>. All nominations should be returned to the Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award Committee, c/o COPAFS, 1429 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 no later than March 31, 2006.

### **SIGSTAT Topics for February 2006 – May 2006**

February 8, 2006: SAS PROC ENTROPY (<http://www.sas.com>)

The ENTROPY procedure implements a parametric method of linear estimation based on Generalized Maximum entropy. The ENTROPY procedure is suitable when there are outliers in the data and robustness is required, or when the model is ill-posed or undetermined for the observed data, or for regressions involving small data sets. Charlie Hallahan will be the speaker.

March 8, 2006: SAS PROC GLIMMIX (<http://www.sas.com>)

The GLIMMIX procedure fits statistical models to data with correlations or nonconstant variability and where the response is not necessarily normally distributed. These models are known as generalized linear mixed models (GLMM). The GLMMs, like linear mixed models, assume normal (Gaussian) random effects. Conditional on these random effects, data can have any distribution in the exponential family. In the absence of random effects, the GLIMMIX procedure fits generalized linear models (fit by the GENMOD procedure). Charlie Hallahan will be the speaker.

April 19, 2006: Introduction to Enterprise Guide 4.1 for Statistical Analysis (<http://www.sas.com>)

The demo begins with a quick tour through the layout of Enterprise Guide (EG) as a menu-based interface to SAS procedures. Emphasis in this workshop will be on the statistical capabilities of EG. In particular, a set of data (put together using enhanced features of the query builder task) will serve as a case study for a forecasting exercise. The demo will show how code generated by EG can be customized, stored, and rerun, and custom reports saved with new Report Controls Integration. Linda Atkinson and Charlie Hallahan will be the speakers.

May 17, 2006: Univariate Detrending Using SAS: Some Examples and Applications (<http://www.sas.com>)

Detrending or filtering is an important tool for the macroeconomist studying business cycle fluctuations. Business cycles can be thought of as deviations of output from its trend. As such, detrending or filtering allows us to focus on the 'cyclical' properties of output. Four methods of detrending using SAS will be presented: Beveridge-Nelson decomposition, Hodrick-Prescott filter, Baxter-King filter, and Unobserved Components. Two applications of univariate detrending are also

presented. The first is to use SAS to generate 'stylized facts' of the business cycle and the second is to examine the consequences of detrending on the effects of monetary policy on output. Ban Cheah, Westat, will be the speaker.

**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 **12:00 to 1:00 (note new time)**. Enter the South Tower & take the elevator to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to check in at the guard's desk.

First-time attendees should contact Charlie Hallahan, 202-694-5051, [hallahan@ers.usda.gov](mailto: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/>.

### **WSS AUDIT**

The audit of the WSS financial and income tax statements for tax year 2004 (tax year 2004 for a tax-exempt organization runs from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005) has been completed. The statements were found to be in order. The auditor thanks Treasurer John M. Finamore for his excellent cooperation.

The June 30, 2005 balance in the business economy checking account was \$16,881.34. Total tax year 2004 WSS revenues were \$39,861.

Michael P. Cohen, WSS Auditor

#### **Note from the WSS NEWS Editor**

Items for publication in the April issue of the WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than February 28, 2006. E-mail items to Michael Feil at [michael.feil@usda.gov](mailto:michael.feil@usda.gov).

## Program Announcement

**Title:** **Indirect Monetary Incentives with a Complex Agricultural Establishment Survey**

**Chair:** Diane Willimack, Census Bureau

**Speakers:** Dan Beckler and Kathy Ott, USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

**Discussant:** Danna Moore, Washington State University

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, February 22, 2006 / 12:30 - 2 pm

**Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Center Room 4. To be placed on the seminar list attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to [wss\\_seminar@bls.gov](mailto:wss_seminar@bls.gov) (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station.

**Sponsor:** Methodology Section, WSS

**Abstract:** The United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts several agricultural surveys. One of the most complex is the annual Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) Phase III, a survey that collects detailed economic data such as farm assets, operator expenses, farm income, debt, and operator characteristics. Part of this survey's sample uses a sixteen-page questionnaire with mail-out/mail-back data collection and face-to-face nonresponse follow-up.

Both prepaid and promised indirect monetary incentives were used in survey year 2004 in order to increase mail response rates and reduce costly face-to-face follow-up interviews. Five treatment groups, including a control group, were used for the incentive experiment. Prepaid and promised indirect cash incentives – in the form of \$20 automated teller machine (ATM) cards – and priority mail were used as stimuli. Response rates, ATM card usage, and costs for the treatment groups will be presented. In addition, recommendations and future use of incentives at NASS will be discussed.

## Program Announcement

- Title:** **Estimating Drug Use Prevalence Using Latent Class Models with Item Count Response as One of the Indicators**
- Chair:** Dean H. Judson, U.S. Bureau of the Census
- Speaker:** Paul Biemer, RTI International  
WebPage: <http://www.rti.org/experts.cfm?objectid=6E703887-343D-4D32-8DDA0F933AA1A886>
- Discussant:** Douglas Wright, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Date/Time:** Tuesday, March 28, 2006 / 12:30 - 2 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Center in G440. To be placed on the seminar list attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to [wss\\_seminar@bls.gov](mailto:wss_seminar@bls.gov) (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsor:** Methodology Section, WSS
- Abstract:** The item count (IC) method for estimating the prevalence of sensitive behaviors was applied to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) to estimate the prevalence of past year cocaine use. Despite considerable effort and research to refine and adapt the IC method to this survey, the method failed to produce estimates that were any larger than the estimates based on self-reports. Further analysis indicated the problem to be measurement error in the IC responses. To address the problem, a new model-based estimator was proposed to correct the IC estimates for measurement error and produce less biased prevalence estimates. The model combines the IC data, replicated measurements of the IC items, and responses to the cocaine use question to obtain estimates of the classification error in the observed data. The data were treated as fallible indicators of (latent) true values and traditional latent class analysis assumptions were made to obtain an identifiable model. The resulting estimates of the cocaine use prevalence were approximately 43 percent larger than the self-report only estimates and the estimated underreporting rates were consistent with those estimated from other studies of drug use underreporting.

## 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@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:apeterson@insightpolicyresearch.com) or (703) 387-3032.

### WESTAT

#### AN EMPLOYEE-OWNED RESEARCH CORPORATION

Westat is an employee-owned corporation headquartered in the suburbs of Washington, DC (Rockville, Maryland). We provide statistical consulting and survey research to the agencies of the U.S. Government and to a broad range of business and institutional clients. With a strong technical and managerial staff and a long record of quality research, Westat has become one of the leading survey research and statistical consulting organizations in the United States.

Our company was founded in 1961 by three statisticians. The current staff of more than 1,800 includes over 60 statisticians, as well as research, technical, and administrative staff. In addition, our professional staff is supported by data collection and processing personnel situated locally and in field sites around the country. The work atmosphere is open, progressive, and highly conducive to professional growth.

Our statistical efforts continue to expand in areas such as the environment, energy, health, education, and human resources. Westat statisticians are actively involved in teaching graduate-level courses in statistical methods and survey methodology in collaborative arrangements with area colleges and universities.

We are currently recruiting for the following statistical position:

#### **Survey Sampling Statistician (Job Code WSS/DRM/6001)**

Three or more years of relevant experience in sample design and selection, frames development, weighting, imputation, and variance estimation. Must have a master's or doctoral degree in statistics and have excellent writing skills. Coursework in sample survey design is highly desirable.

Westat offers excellent growth opportunities and an outstanding benefits package including life and health insurance, an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), a 401(k) plan, flexible spending accounts, professional development, and tuition assistance. For immediate consideration, please send your cover letter, indicating the Westat Job Code, and resume by one of the following methods to:

Job Code is **REQUIRED** to apply.

Westat • Attn: Resume System • 1650 Research Boulevard • Rockville, MD 20850-3195

**Email: [resume@westat.com](mailto:resume@westat.com) • FAX: (888) 201-1452**

Equal Opportunity Employer.

[www.westat.com](http://www.westat.com)

## SEEKING STATISTICIANS

Life Science Recruiters is seeking to fill a number of positions with US pharmaceutical companies for PhD Statisticians/Biostatisticians with some clinical trials experience. They range from "nearly beginners" with 1 – 2 years of experience to Department Directors. All pay in the six figures with big bonus/stock/fringe/relocation packages and are located in Maryland, California and upstate New York.

If you are interested in this field and have any clinical trial experience, please send your CV/resume to:

Nancy Deeg  
NDeeg@LifeScienceRecruiters.com  
757-241-0361 Direct  
757-233-8005 Fax  
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4708 Denver Avenue  
Norfolk, Va. 23513-3938

WEBSITE: [LifeScienceRecruiters.com](http://LifeScienceRecruiters.com)

### Senior Research Statistician

RTI International invites applications for a senior level statistician who will serve as a principal investigator on multi-center, multi-protocol studies and to provide long-range direction on research programs in the statistics and epidemiology unit. We require candidates who have a proven track record in successfully leading multi-center research. RTI's staff in the Statistics and Epidemiology unit conduct surveys and epidemiologic and clinical studies and have research interests in child and maternal health, genetics, environmental health, health disparities, HIV/AIDS, cancer, cardiovascular, and other chronic disease and infectious diseases.

Responsibilities of the Position:

- Serves as PI for coordinating centers of multi-site projects.
  - Provides senior leadership for all aspects of the project including study design, protocol development, study implementation, preliminary and final data analysis, and presentation of study results.
  - Maintains effective liaison with funding officials, collaborators from universities and other organizations, laboratories, clinical centers, and specimen storage facilities.
  - Leads development of grant, cooperative agreement and contract proposals.
  - Leads development of manuscripts for refereed journals.
  - Presents research findings at scientific conferences.
  - Monitors overall process and quality of studies and activities.
  - Monitors study resources and budgets.
  - Serves in a leadership role in strategic planning, business development, and staff mentoring.
- Professional and Personal Qualifications:

- A doctorate in statistics or related field.

- At least 10 years experience working with epidemiological and/or clinical trial research.
- Experience in applying statistical methods to clinical, epidemiological, behavioral or environmental problems.
- Demonstrable track record of leadership in developing and sustaining a climate that fosters growth in research funding, staff capabilities, and scientific excellence and reputation.
- A record of scientific stature in presentation and publication of study results in peer-reviewed journals on methodological topics related to multi-site study design.
- Participation in major professional societies or associations.
- Extensive experience in developing business and working with clients that fund research in public health, including federal agencies, private foundations, and/or the commercial sector.
- Excellent skills in communication, negotiation, compromise, and building consensus within and between groups.

We are flexible on the work location. Possible locations include RTI's offices in Rockville, MD, Washington, DC, Atlanta, GA, Waltham, MA or Research Triangle Park, NC. To apply, please visit our website, [www.rti.org](http://www.rti.org) and apply to job number MB12217. We are proud to be an EEO/AA employer M/F/D/V.

### **Survey and Program Evaluation Division Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC)**

DMDC anticipates filling multiple supervisory and non-supervisory senior positions in the Survey and Program Evaluation Division located in Rosslyn, Virginia. The positions will be advertised on [www.USAJOB.gov](http://www.USAJOB.gov) and are expected to close in early to mid February. Starting salary is \$91,407. Positions are in the GS-101 (Social Science Analyst) and GS-1530 (Survey Statistician) series. If you have questions, please e-mail Timothy.Elig@osd.pentagon.mil or call (703)696.5858.

The mission of DMDC is to: (1) provide a facility within DoD for the collection and analysis of personnel data, and (2) furnish reports using this information, as well as advice and assistance on information requirements to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments, other DoD components, and non-DoD users. The *Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program* (HRSAP), located at DMDC, uses probability-based sample surveys to support the personnel information needs of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [USD(P&R)]. These surveys assess the attitudes and opinions of the entire Department of Defense (DoD) community—active-duty, Reserve, civilian employees, and military families—on a wide range of personnel issues. The Web-based survey program, known as the *Status of Forces Surveys* (SOFS), provides data several times a year on active-duty and Reserve component members, and DoD civilian employees. Surveys on these populations have been conducted periodically since the 1970s. Web-administration, supplemented by paper-and-pencil surveys, are used to obtain data on sensitive topics (e.g., sexual or racial harassment) and from populations who might have limited Internet access (e.g., spouses of military members

Employees in the Personnel Survey Branch lead and work on teams responsible for survey sampling, weighting, operations, and analysis. Duties require not only knowledge and experience in survey sampling, weighting, and analysis, but also the development of both technical reports that summarize research methods, analyses performed and results, as well as reports for senior officials who use the data for policy formulation and program evaluation purposes. The incumbent must have broad knowledge of current personnel policy and database issues that might be addressed via surveys. Incumbents must have highly technical, state-of-the-art knowledge of (1) theory and procedures for survey sampling, weighting, and analysis using

SUDAAN and SAS, and (2) standards for Federal Statistical Policy and all rules and regulations governing the collection and reporting of survey data from human subjects.

Employees in the Program Evaluation Branch lead and work on teams responsible for survey development and analysis. This includes, but is not limited to: meeting with OSD program evaluation clients and determining methods of investigation; planning, designing, and conducting surveys to determine behavior experiences, attitudes, and opinions on specified topics; preparing reports and briefings. These may include short-term studies, (e.g., summarizing data related to military separation incentives, or a specific program's personnel policies and practices), to longer-term longitudinal investigations involving, for example, periodic surveys of Reserve component members' attitudes regarding deployments and retention decisions, and of gender and race relations in the Armed Forces and in the Service Academies..



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