

GSS in 2004: Adding to Our List of Offerings

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A goal of the Government Statistics Section (GSS) is to add to the already extensive menu of activities and services that it offers to its members and to the profession, and the Section took several steps toward that goal in 2004. As Chair of the GSS in 2004, I'd like to summarize the Section's activities during my term, some of which represented continuations from previous years and some of which represented new initiatives.

Before I begin, I'd like to dedicate this article to Pat Doyle, a former Chair of the GSS who passed away in 2004. Pat was a fine person and a very active contributor to the Section and to our profession, and we miss her.

I'd also like to mention that the GSS's many successes in 2004 were due in large part to the dedicated work of its volunteers. The Section's officers and contacts are acknowledged at the end of this article.

Continuing Activities

In 2004, the GSS continued to co-sponsor several awards and scholarships, including the following:

- The Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship, which supports work toward a career in government statistics (winner: Jennifer Park).
- The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award (winner: Beth A. Kilss).
- The Roger Herriot Award for Innovation (winner: Paula J. Schneider).
- A JSM student paper competition (winners: Bidisha Mandal, Murthy N. Mittinty, Sujata Patil, Nikolaos Tzavidis, and Yang Yang).

The Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship is now fully funded, thanks in part to a generous contribution from the Social Statistics Section (SSS). Beginning in 2005, the GSS will enter a partnership with the SSS in administering the scholarship.

The GSS was very active at JSM 2004. First, the Section had an outstanding program of technical sessions and roundtable luncheons. Second, the Section had a well-attended and spirited business meeting and mixer. At the business meeting, John Czajka was presented with an award for distinguished service to the Section. Finally, at the ASA Presidential Address and Awards session, twelve members of the Section (Jesse A. Berlin, R. Ronald Bosecker, Raymond L. Chambers, Michael P. Cohen, Susan M. Hinkins, Parthasarathi Lahiri, David A. Marker, Thomas B. Petska, Joseph J. Salvo, Robert L. Santos, Michael A. Stoto, and G. David Williamson) were named ASA Fellows.

The GSS continued to strive to provide information to its members and others via its newsletter (joint with the SSS), its website, its listserve (GSSLIST), articles in *Amstat News*, articles in the JSM Proceedings, and the GSS brochure.

Speaking of information, further details of the activities and resources summarized above are provided at the GSS website (<http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/>) and in the July and December 2004 issues of the *GSS/SSS Newsletter*, which can be viewed via the website.

New Initiatives

In line with its goal of expanding its offerings, the GSS initiated several projects and activities in 2004, as described below.

The Section co-sponsored a very successful Workshop on Web-Based Data Collection in Washington, DC in 2004; see the July 2004 issue of the *GSS/SSS Newsletter* for further details. The Section has also agreed to co-sponsor the Third International Conference on Establishment Surveys, which is planned for 2007 in Montreal, Canada.

The Section donated funds for the continued development of the ASA's Privacy, Confidentiality, and Data Security Website (<http://www.amstat.org/comm/cmtepc/>). The objective of the website is to provide the most useful information about methodological, legal, ethical, and technical issues that are important for protecting and using statistical data.

Finally, to provide more frequent and timely GSS-related news, while simultaneously cutting costs, the Section is exploring alternative ways to communicate with its members and others, such as increased use of electronic communications. E-mails can now be sent to Section members via the ASA Office using the e-mail addresses on record with the ASA. To ensure that you receive such electronic communications, please make sure that the ASA has your current e-mail address.

Acknowledgments

The members of the GSS Executive Committee for 2004 (besides myself) were: Wendy Alvey (Past Chair); Chet Bowie (Chair-Elect); Jana Asher (Program Chair); Brian Harris-Kojetin (Program Chair-Elect); Patty Becker (Secretary/Treasurer); Shelly Ver Ploeg (Publications Officer); Dan Kasprzyk (Representative to the Council of Sections); and Clyde Tucker and John Czajka (Representatives to the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics). The Section's newsletter, website, and listserv were managed by: Pat Melvin (*GSS/SSS Newsletter* Editor); Bill Wong (*Amstat Online* Assistant Editor); and Tai Phan (GSSLIST Coordinator). The Section's other committee members were: Jana Asher, Sameena Salvucci, and Bob Groves (Smith Scholarship Committee); Clyde Tucker, Pat Doyle, and Rich Allen (Fellows Committee); Jennifer Madans (Representative to the Griffith Award Committee); and Phil Kott (Representative to the Herriot Award Committee). The ASA staff members linked directly to the Section were Bill Smith (Staff Liaison) and Monica Clark (Chapters and Sections Coordinator).

I'd like to thank the outgoing members of the Executive Committee (Jana Asher, Patty Becker, Shelly Ver Ploeg, and Clyde Tucker) and other committees (Jana Asher and Phil Kott) for their service to the Section. I'd also like to thank Wendy Alvey for agreeing to assume the role of COPAFS Representative for 2005-2006 and Clyde Tucker for agreeing to remain on and chair the Fellows Committee for an extra year in 2005 to replace Pat Doyle.

Finally, I'd like to welcome the incoming members of the Executive Committee and other committees for 2005, many of whom already started their work in 2004: Stephanie Shipp (Chair-Elect); Mike (P.) Cohen (Program Chair-Elect); John Hall (Secretary/Treasurer); Robert Lussier (Publications Officer); Mary Batcher (Fellows Committee); and Dan Weinberg (Representative to the Herriot Award Committee).

It was a pleasure to serve as Chair of the GSS in 2004, and I wish Chet Bowie much success as Chair in 2005.