

Helen Walker SOCIETY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2025

Highlighting your donor dollars at work!

Message From Ron

Thank You

As we head into summer, I want to thank you for your continued support and engagement with the ASA and our mission. Your generosity makes possible so much of what we do—from student travel grants to public lectures, and from supporting new leaders to preserving the strength of our federal statistical system.

We continue to monitor significant developments affecting federal statistical agencies. Recent policy shifts and staffing changes are raising questions about the long-term resilience of our nation's statistical infrastructure. While the challenges are real, the response from our community—your community—gives us hope. Together, we are amplifying the importance of credible, objective statistics and supporting efforts to keep public data strong and trustworthy.

In this issue, you'll find highlights from our ongoing work, opportunities to get involved, and stories of impact—all made possible by donors like you. Thank you for standing with us as we uphold the values of transparency, innovation, and service to the public good.



Dionne Price Public Lecture Series Debuts with Powerful Conversation on Data and Privacy

The inaugural Dionne Price Public Lecture drew a crowd of nearly 200 attendees, both in person and online, for Claire Bowen's compelling talk, *“Government Data of the People, by the People, for the People: Balancing Personal Privacy and the Public Good.”* The event sparked thoughtful discussion around how government agencies can responsibly use data to benefit society, and what we - the public- can do to protect our data privacy. Attendees who joined us in person also enjoyed a reception following the lecture—a tradition we plan to continue.

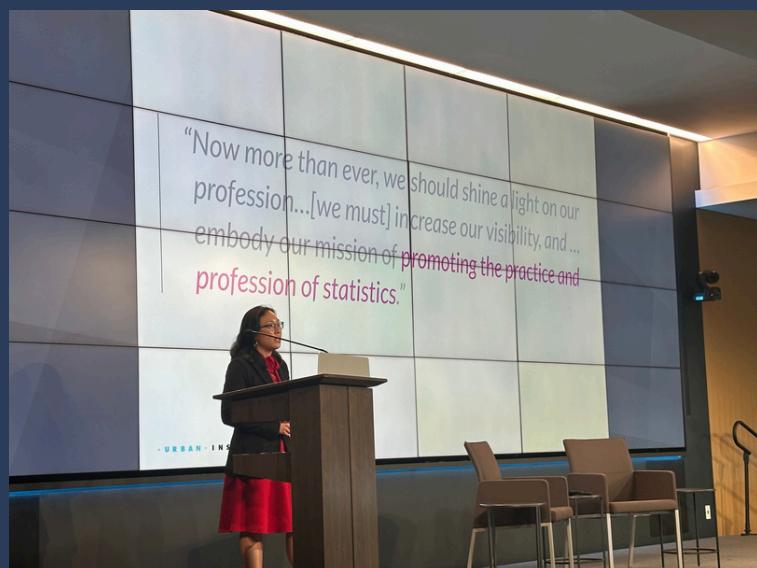
If you missed the lecture, you can watch it here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiG3YTywU3Y>

Share your suggestions for future lecturers with us!



Left: 2018 ASA President Lisa LaVange gave a touching tribute to Dionne before introducing Claire to speak. Dionne's parents, brother, and sister in-law were also in attendance.

Right: Claire ended her thought-provoking talk with a quote taken from Dionne's presidential address, *“Now more than ever, we should shine a light on our profession... [we must] increase our visibility and...embody our mission of promoting the practice and profession of statistics.”*



ASA Headquarters Update: Building Sale in Progress

You may have heard that ASA's headquarters building is up for sale—and we're pleased to share that we've received an offer and are moving forward as planned. The buyer is prepared for the City of Alexandria's extensive approval process, which could take 12 months or more. Once the timing is right, we'll begin the search for a new space, with the intention of staying in Old Town Alexandria. This decision was made thoughtfully, as the current building requires significant resources to maintain and is larger than we need. We're excited about what this transition will mean for ASA's future.



Looking Ahead to JSM 2025 in Nashville

This year's Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) will take place in Nashville, and while we anticipate lower attendance due to ongoing travel restrictions and other factors, we remain committed to delivering a meaningful experience for all who participate. JSM is an important source of revenue for ASA, so your continued support means more than ever during this challenging time—thank you! If you'll be in Music City, be sure to add the Helen Walker Society lunch to your calendar. We'll gather on Tuesday, August 5 at 12:00 p.m., and we look forward to seeing you there.



Volunteer Opportunity: Inspire the Next Generation of Statisticians

Support budding statisticians by serving as a judge for the ASA Project Competition! This rewarding and low-pressure volunteer role lets you review student statistics projects from across the country—all from the comfort of your home. Judges typically evaluate 6–12 projects during round 1 in June, with a brief round 2 in early July. A scoring rubric is provided, and all projects are reviewed by multiple judges. Educators and professionals from all areas of statistics are welcome.

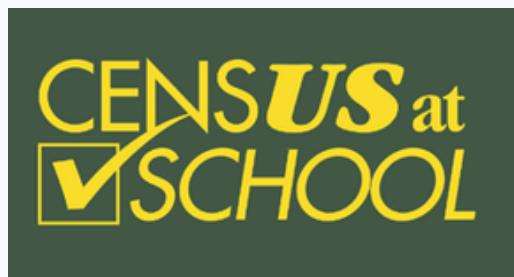
Sign up by Friday, May 30 using the form below:

[Judge Recruitment Form](#)

Questions? Contact Dione Maxwell, Head Judge, at ASAProjectJudging@gmail.com



Interested in what other classroom engagement tools the ASA has? [Visit our K-12 Educators page.](#)



Federal Statistical Agencies at Risk—We Need Your Help

The ASA continues to monitor serious threats to the capacity and integrity of the federal statistical system. Recent actions across several agencies—such as steep staffing reductions, canceled data products, and reclassification of federal positions under a revived Schedule F policy—are undermining the nonpartisan, evidence-based foundation on which our government, economy, and communities rely. **These setbacks jeopardize the federal government's ability to deliver trustworthy, high-quality data that researchers, policymakers, and the public depend on.**



Through our [Nation's Data at Risk project](#), we are documenting these developments in real time. Our [online monitoring page](#) includes updates on major disruptions, such as:

National Center for Education Statistics dismantled: After seeing virtually all data collection contracts canceled and its commissioner placed on administrative leave, all but three of the remaining employees of the National Center for Education Statistics were terminated. The future of the agency and its congressionally mandated programs remain uncertain. The time to determine the agency's fate, along with that of its programs, is likely to lead to gaps in many of the agency's programs, including the National Assessment for Educational Progress, often referred to as the Nation's Report Card.

Social Security Administration's statistical agency: The number of employees for the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics has gone from approximately 80 to 40 employees since March of last year, including its head. Furthermore, there are indications that ORES may be moved under the Office of the Chief Information Officer, a politically appointed position.

Census Bureau and Economic Statistics advisory committees terminated: The BLS Data Users Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee were both terminated in March, mirroring the early-March terminations of the four advisory committees for the US Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis Advisory Committee, as well as the Federal Economic Statistics Committee.

We need **your** help to protect the future of federal statistics. Please [visit our monitoring page](#) to learn more about the issues we're tracking. You can contribute by sharing updates, documents, or your own story about how federal data supports your work.

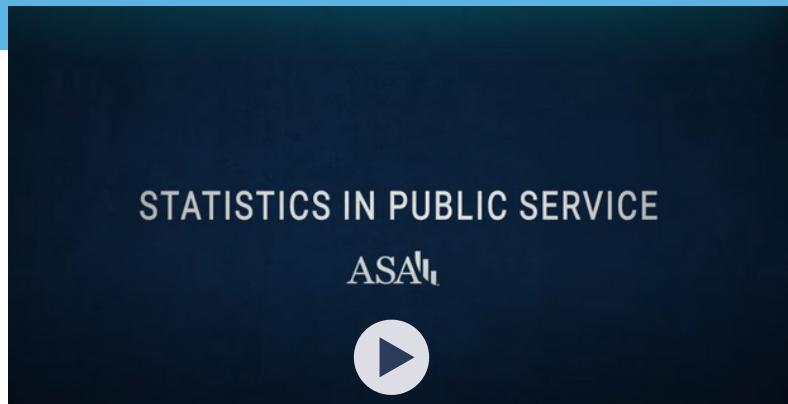
Together, we can respond to these challenges and advocate for the strong, independent statistical system our nation needs.

Telling Our Stories: Rob Santos on the Future of Statistics

The latest installment of *Telling Our Stories* features Rob Santos—2021 ASA President and former Director of the U.S. Census Bureau—offering a deeply personal and thought-provoking reflection on the evolving role of statistics in today's society. Through stories from his own life and career, Santos highlights how statisticians must adapt to an era of declining public participation in surveys, rapidly shifting economic realities, and growing demand for meaningful, community-driven data.



In the video, Santos candidly shares lessons learned from stepping outside his comfort zone, facing ethical dilemmas in high-stakes research (including post-9/11 studies), and working on the front lines of government data collection. Santos calls for a bold transformation in how data are collected and used—arguing for a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods to capture the full picture of community needs, especially in times of crisis. His remarks underscore the need for statisticians to be more than data processors—they must be ethical leaders, creative thinkers, and advocates for equity and relevance in their work.



This powerful video reminds us of the vital role statisticians play in shaping a more just, informed, and resilient society. Watch the full [video on ASA's YouTube channel](#) and share it with colleagues and friends who believe in the power of data to drive positive change.



Have an idea for a future video? Send them my way
ron@amstat.org

Celebrating a Legacy of Statistical Leadership

A New Award to Honor Transformative Impact in Official Statistics

Katherine Wallman shaped the U.S. federal statistical system like no one else. During her remarkable 25-year tenure as Chief Statistician of the United States, she championed innovation, integrity, and collaboration across all levels of government. Referring often to the decentralized federal system as the “federal statistical family,” she served as both its visionary leader and steadfast steward. Now, **the newly established Katherine K. Wallman Award seeks to honor her legacy by recognizing the next generation of trailblazers in official statistics.** We are especially grateful to the award’s organizing group—Connie Citro, Jennifer Park, Brian Harris-Kojetin, Hermann Habermann, and Jennifer Madans—for helping shape this important new recognition.



The award celebrates individuals or small groups who are transforming the relevance, credibility, and public value of official statistics—just as Katherine did. It highlights innovations—whether technical, legal, or procedural—that make lasting impacts at the federal, state, or local level. Past examples of this kind of transformative work include the creation of the American Community Survey, the Supplemental Poverty Measure, and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act. These advances often rely on cross-agency collaboration and forward-thinking leadership—hallmarks of Katherine’s approach.

To launch the award, ASA is raising \$12,500 to fund its first five years, with a long-term goal of building a \$75,000 endowment to support it in perpetuity. To contribute to the award, visit [Katherine’s Legacy Page](#).

UPCOMING

- June 3: JSM early registration deadline
- June 11: Registration opens for the 2025 ASA Biopharmaceutical Section Regulatory-Industry Workshop
- June 29: National Statistics Day in India
- July 1: Norman Beery Memorial Scholarship applications deadline
- July 15: Dorothy Marie Lamb and Annette Lila Ryne Memorial Scholarship application deadline
- August 2-7: Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) in Nashville
- August 5: Helen Walker Society Luncheon- Invitations coming soon.

And now, without further ado...Ron's Dad Jokes!

I finally figured out what is wrong with my brain. Nothing is right on the left side of my brain, while on the right side of my brain, nothing is left.

Sherry said I ruined our anniversary. I don't know how. I didn't even know it was today.

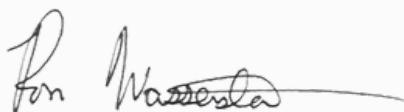
When I was young, I was very poor. But after many years of hard work and dedication, I am no longer young.

I wasn't sure how many people attended the Nationals game last night, so I just gave a ballpark estimate.

Since I know how to play the guitar, I thought it wouldn't be too hard to learn to play the piano. But it's not that easy of an instrument to pick up.

Thank you again for your incredible support of the ASA. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at anytime. I'm always happy to hear from you.

Sincerely,



Ron Wasserstein
ASA Executive Director