

Helen Walker.

SOCIETY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Summer/Fall



HELEN WALKER SOCIETY LUNCHEON

A message from Ronald Wasserstein, Executive Director

I always feel a certain amount of anxiety before JSM because ... well, there are a lot of moving parts. Almost immediately on arrival in Nashville the stress was replaced with the joy of gathering with colleagues. Catching up with so many of you at the Helen Walker Society lunch was truly a highlight of the summer. As is always true, I was amazed by the accomplishments of our colleagues and genuine enthusiasm with which we were able to celebrate the practice and profession of statistics. If you have not seen it, I know you will enjoy the [JSMtv playlist](#).

I hope you are enjoying the [Statistical Moments](#) that I have been sharing. In these short videos, my goal is to highlight our opportunities, successes, and, yes, challenges.

I even did a video on JSM site selection. While we are preparing for JSM 2026 in Boston, we are accepting bids from cities for JSM 2030 and 2031. Creating these videos is both fun and rewarding because I can elevate our vibrant community. I am grateful for your support which makes the work we do possible.

If you would like to suggest a topic for a Statistical Moment or provide any other feedback, please reach out to me. I'm always happy to hear from you. In fact, please take a few minutes to complete this [short poll](#). After all, your input helps us grow and improve!

Sincerely,



RON WASSERSTEIN
ASA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In this newsletter
you can expect:

ASA President
Update

Highlights

Building
Updates

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Activities

Call to Action

Dad Jokes



ASA President Ji-Hyun Lee recognizes our “hidden gems,” those whose contributions often go unseen.

By tradition, the November President's Corner in “Amstat News” is about gratitude for our members, board of directors, staff, and partners. This year, ASA President Ji-Hyun Lee wants to continue the tradition in a slightly different way. She wants to shine a light on our “hidden gems,” those whose contributions often go unseen. These are statisticians and data scientists who quietly and steadfastly advance science, serve their communities, support education, and protect public health, yet rarely receive public recognition.

We invite you to help recognize them. It's simple. Just complete this [form](#) with their name, affiliation, and a short quote describing why they inspire you. Ji-Hyun will highlight these Hidden Gems in her November column.

Please submit your nominations by **October 10**. Thank you for helping to honor the quiet impact that sustains our field.



JSM 2025 Plenary Videos Are Available

JSM 2025 in Nashville, Tennessee, may be over, but the valuable insights from this summer's plenaries are now available for your viewing.

These include the ASA President's Address & Awards, ASA President's Invited Address, Deming Lecture, and COPSS Distinguished Achievement Award and Lectureship.



Telling Our Stories

The Telling Our Stories videos are powerful, and we'd love your help getting the word out. **If you know any teachers, administrators, or others in education would you consider sharing the videos with them?** The more educators who know about this resource, the greater impact we can have. Any help spreading awareness through your networks would be incredibly appreciated! Please check out the latest installment features a new video from [Rob Santos](#) on the importance of statistics in public service. Save the date for the next video in the series on **November 21**.

Highlights



Giving Day 2025

Save the Date for November 21! NEW Section Showdown –

For the first time, ASA sections will compete for Giving Day glory. The section with the highest percentage of members giving will be crowned MVP (most valuable percentage) and receive a \$500 JSM mixer voucher, and an honorable mention will earn a \$250 voucher. Just write in your section when making your donation on Giving Day.



IDEA FORUM

2025 Idea Forum

Statistics advances science, business, and medicine with a global impact. The annual Influencing Discovery Exploration and Action (IDEA) Forum brings together statisticians, leaders, and policymakers to develop solutions for the most pressing challenges facing the world community. We invite you to join us in shaping this conversation. Stay tuned for the official date and registration details!

Communities in Action



Building on her JSM 2026 theme, Jeri Mulrow's presidential initiative is named Communities in Action. The vision of this initiative is to empower ASA members to raise the profile of the practice and profession of statistics by partnering with community groups to foster informed decision-making. Opportunities for participation include:

- helping develop a repository with a toolkit that contains useful materials on all aspects of this initiative, including how to build relationships,
- crafting initial outreach messages
- creating and delivering effective presentations,
- volunteering to organize a community activity,
- and helping to create sustainable engagement channels between data experts and local communities.

We're excited to launch this new initiative and want to hear your thoughts on how we can make the greatest impact together. Your ideas for community involvement are especially valuable—whether you're thinking about local partnerships, volunteer opportunities, grassroots outreach, or creative ways to engage with organizations or policy makers. Please share any suggestions or innovative approaches you think could strengthen this initiative's efforts to create meaningful connections using this form - <https://amstat.jotform.com/team/cross-function/communities-in-action>.



Building Update

We're thrilled to share an important milestone in ASA's transition: the developer has completed their due diligence and is moving forward with purchasing our headquarters building! While the final sale will take several months to complete, this step gives us the confidence to begin planning our relocation.

Our plan is to remain in Old Town Alexandria, finding a space that better fits our needs. The current building is larger than necessary and requires significant resources to maintain. Relocating will allow us to free up resources to focus on programs, services, and initiatives that directly benefit our members and the broader statistical community.

As we move through this process, we will keep you updated with all the developments ahead. Stay tuned as we plan for a new chapter.



The Latest in ASA's Science Policy and Advocacy Activities

The ASA continues to advocate for the health and independence of the federal statistical system. Our recently released report, **Nation's Data at a Crossroads** report underscores the risks to federal statistical agencies, pointing to shrinking budgets, staffing shortages, political interference, and an erosion of professional autonomy. The report makes clear that urgent action is needed to safeguard the nation's data infrastructure, which underpins evidence-based policy, business decisions, and public trust.

This fall, ASA is also closely monitoring the FY2026 appropriations process, where bipartisan congressional efforts have helped stave off severe proposed cuts to NIH, though the Supreme Court's recent ruling allowing NIH to withhold \$2 billion in grants highlights the uncertainty facing research funding. Additional concerns include leadership turmoil at the CDC, where political pressure has contributed to senior staff resignations, and ongoing threats to agencies like the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Economic Research Service (ERS), and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). ASA also continues to amplify the need to fund essential aspects of the Energy Information Agency, as well as the National Center for Health Statistics, which constitute our nation's critical infrastructure. ASA has joined coalition partners in issuing statements defending these agencies and reinforcing the importance of professional autonomy and the integrity of data-driven decision-making.

The ASA is also urging the Department of Education to recognize the central role of statistical literacy in AI education priorities and the National Science Foundation to engage the statistical community with its AI initiatives.

Ron has launched a new Statistical Moments video series spotlighting ASA's support for the federal statistical system. The first video highlights the dedication of BLS employees and affirms their integrity in the face of recent attacks. Upcoming videos emphasize why strong, trusted federal statistics are essential for every aspect of American life, from jobs and health to agriculture and education.

The series will conclude with a powerful message from the U.S. Air Force Memorial about urgent efforts to safeguard our nation's data.

On 9/24, Ron wrote to the Senate HELP Committee urging careful scrutiny of the nominee for Bureau of Labor Statistics commissioner. In his letter, he emphasized the importance of appointing a leader with deep expertise in economic statistics, strong leadership skills, and the trust of both BLS staff and the broader statistical community to guide the agency through this critical moment. You can read Ron's full letter **here**. ASA is also advocating to preserve the work of USDA's ERS and NASS, warning that relocating these agencies could disrupt continuity in essential agricultural data. ASA is working with the Friends of BLS coalition to defend the Bureau of Labor Statistics, issuing statements in support of its mission and staff amid political challenges. These efforts, along with the release of the Nation's Data at a Crossroads report, reinforce ASA's leadership in ensuring that U.S. federal statistics remain strong, independent, and trustworthy.

We're also excited that the work of the Federal Statistical System Modernization continues under the leadership of Bill Beach, Erica Groshen, and Nancy Potok and expert input and help of Connie Citro, Shelly Martinez, and Jen Park. They are holding their third convening on the future of federal statistics in October. We also received funding from the Lumina Foundation and the William T. Grant Foundation to undertake a project specific to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Internationally, ASA continues to stand with Andreas Georgiou, the Greek statistician persecuted for upholding data integrity, reaffirming our commitment to defending statistics and statisticians worldwide.

Your support allows the ASA to remain at the forefront of these critical conversations by defending federal statistics, protecting research funding, and advancing statistical literacy. Together, we are safeguarding the data that serve as the backbone of science, policy, and democracy.

Ways to Support ASA's Advocacy

Your support allows ASA to remain a leading advocate for federal statistics and research. Here are three ways you can make a difference:

- Share the report: Help raise awareness by sharing [The Nation's Data at a Crossroads](#) with colleagues, policymakers, and others who rely on accurate, independent data.
- Amplify our advocacy: Help spread the word on social media using #DataInfrastructure and #CountOnStats. You can also connect with Steve Pierson on [LinkedIn](#) and [BlueSky](#) and Michelle Crosby on [LinkedIn](#).
- Sustain our efforts: Your contributions enable ASA to defend the independence of federal statistics, protect research funding, and promote statistical literacy at the highest levels of government. **Provide any information** you have about the federal statistical agencies, units, or other Interagency Council on Statistical Policy entities. You may also [email your information](#).



Join Us for the 2025 ASA Links Lecture

Mark your calendar for **October 24** at 12:00 p.m. ET and be part of the 2025 ASA Links Lecture, "*Praivacy (noun)*"
Pronounced: /prā-və-sē/ Balancing Data Confidentiality and Utility."

Presented by Aleksandra (Seša) Slavković with discussant Saki Kinney, this free virtual event honors pioneers Constance Citro, Robert Groves, and Fritz Scheuren and celebrates innovation in official statistics. Don't miss this opportunity to engage with thought leaders shaping the future of federal data.

[Register today!](#)

RON'S DAD - A - BYTES Dad Jokes By Ron

I lost my job at the sunscreen factory.
But I am going to reapply.

Wanted: Someone to brush their teeth
with me because 9 of 10 dentists say
brushing alone won't help tooth decay.
No weirdos please.

I asked Sherry if I could have peace and
quiet while cooking dinner. So, she took
the battery out of the smoke detector.

The sign said "Falling Rocks." I tried it. It's
just not true.

