

Greetings from our incoming 2023 HPSS Chair

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I am honored and excited to extend my warmest greetings as the Chair of HPSS for 2024. I would like to thank the outgoing Chair, Lisa Lix, for her excellent leadership. I look forward to working with the HPSS Executive Committee to support our members and to ensure that our section continues to thrive. As we embark on this new year together, I am eager to lead our community of dedicated members in advancing the crucial intersection of health policy and statistics. Our collective expertise plays a pivotal role in shaping evidence-based policies that have a direct impact on public health outcomes.

In the coming year, my focus will be on fostering collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity within our section. I am committed to promoting a dynamic environment where diverse perspectives converge to address the complex challenges we are facing. I am particularly excited about planning activities for this year for ICHPS in San Diego, California in January 2025 as well as JSM 2024 to be held in Portland, Oregon in August 2024. I hope to see you at both of these fabulous locations!

I invite each of you to actively engage, share your insights, and contribute to the vibrant discussions that will define our path forward, both with respect to section activities and conference planning. With your support, I am confident that we will achieve great strides in promoting data-driven decision-making and influencing policies that positively shape the health of our communities.

I look forward to a year of collaboration, growth, and impactful contributions.

Layla Parast
2023 Chair, HPSS

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2023 HPSS Executive Committee

Chair – Lisa Lix
Chair-Elect – Layla Parast
Past-Chair – Yuanjia Wang

Secretary – José Zubizarreta
Treasurer – Ted Lystig
Publications – Hwanhee Hong & Beth Ann Griffin
Council of Sections Rep – James O'Malley

Program Chair – Jason Brinkley
Program Chair-Elect – Fatema Shafie Khorassani

ICHPS Co-Chair: Beth Ann Griffin & Lane Burgette



ICHPS 2025
January 6-8, 2025
San Diego, CA



Co-Chairs:

Beth Ann Griffin bethg@rand.org

Lane Burgette burgette@rand.org

Our theme: “Statistical innovation to improve health equity”

The Health Policy Statistics Section and the ASA are planning the 15th International Conference on Health Policy Statistics! This conference will be held January 6-8, 2025 in San Diego at the Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa and Marina. Conference co-chairs are Beth Ann Griffin and Lane Burgette. *We need more volunteers for the organizing committees so please reach out to Beth Ann or Lane if you would like to get involved.* In the next few months, we will be soliciting suggestions for workshops and invited sessions. ICHPS is a smaller meeting (typically 300-350 attendees) that provides an excellent opportunity to get to know a community of statisticians and other professionals working in health policy and health services. We look forward to being able to gather and share science and community at ICHPS 2025!

Greetings from our outgoing 2022 HPSS Chair

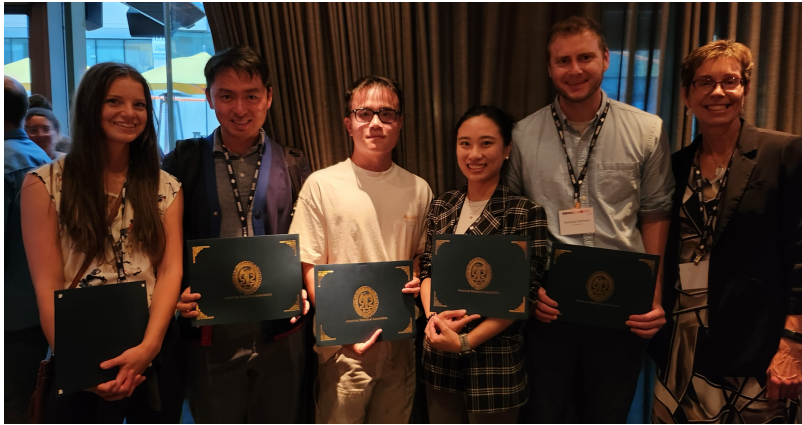
Lisa Lix lisa.lix@umanitoba.ca



My year as Section Chair has flown by, but has left me with a feeling of accomplishment and many happy memories! I am grateful to members of the 2023 Executive Committee for their support along the way, and their constant participation in monthly meetings. I am delighted with the number of Section members who volunteered their time and talents for a multitude of activities, from reviewing student papers, to chairing conference sessions, to promoting the section to potential new members. The year began with a highly successful ICHPS meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, where I had the pleasure of meeting both long-standing and new Section members. Planning for JSM 2023 in Toronto, Canada was intense, but the invited and contributed sessions and the Joint Mixer with the Mental Health Statistics Section went smoothly thanks to the dedication of our Program Chair, Summer Han, and Program Chair-Elect, Jason Brinkley. As I pass the baton to incoming Section Chair, Layla Parast, I know that she is well supported by an enthusiastic 2024 Executive Committee

Lisa Lix
2023 Past-Chair, HPSS

JSM 2023 – HPSS and MHS joint mixer



Paths to leadership in the ASA

An Interview with Drs. Susan Paddock and Bonnie Ghosh-Dastidar

By Beth Ann Griffin bethg@rand.org



Leadership in professional societies like the ASA is critical for advancing the field and promoting its growth and development. To gain insights into how one becomes such a leader, the HPSS has interviewed Dr. Bonnie Ghosh-Dastidar, a Senior Statistician & Head of the Statistics Group at the RAND Corporation and ASA President for 2024, together with Dr. Susan Paddock, Executive Vice President & Chief Statistician at NORC at the University of Chicago and ASA Vice-President for 2025. Drs. Ghosh-Dastidar and Paddock are two inspiring leaders who have made significant contributions to the ASA. They have both served in numerous ASA positions and led major initiatives to promote the profession and mentor the next generation of statisticians. In this interview, Drs. Ghosh-Dastidar and Paddock share their career paths to leadership, the challenges they faced, and the lessons they learned along the way.

Beth Ann: Let's start off by introducing yourself to folks in the section.

Bonnie: *I am a senior Statistician and head of the Statistics Group at the RAND Corporation, a not-for-profit organization that improves policy and decision-making through research and analysis. I work primarily in health policy and earned my PhD in Statistics from Penn State.*

Susan: *Hello! I'm Susan Paddock, Executive Vice President & Chief Statistician at NORC at the University of Chicago. NORC is an independent research organization focused on substantive topics such as health, education, and public affairs. I have been at NORC for four years, where I work to advance NORC's capabilities in statistics, data science, survey methodology, and artificial intelligence. Prior to joining NORC, I was at the RAND Corporation for almost 20 years where I conducted health policy research. I have a Ph.D. in Statistics from Duke University and a B.A. in Math and Biostatistics from the University of Minnesota.*

Beth Ann: Could you describe the various leadership roles you have held within the American Statistical Association (ASA) over the years, and share some insights into how you secured each position?

Bonnie: *I have served in numerous positions to date, including (in chronological order): the Committee on Data Privacy and Confidentiality, Program Chair and Chair for HPSS, Vice Chair and Chair for Council of Sections Governing Board, the committee on Women in Statistics, and as Conference co-chair for ICHPS 2018. I also served as an Associate Editor for Statistics and Public Policy, an ASA journal for three years. My committee appointments were by nomination, with someone putting my name up for those positions. For HPSS, I had been very active in planning invited sessions for ICHPS; these in turn likely led to my appointment as HPSS Program Chair. Of note - my role as Program Chair gave me my first exposure to seeing how the ASA sections cooperate and the Program Chairs come together to plan a grand meeting like JSM.*

Susan: *My first leadership role was secretary/treasurer for the Bayesian section (SBSS) in 2004-2005. I was nominated to run by someone who interviewed me when I was on the job market in 1999. I also became active with ICHPS - giving talks, chairing sessions, and joining the scientific organizing committee. All of this helped me build relationships in HPSS that I assume led to being asked to run for HPSS Program Chair first and then Chair. After those positions, I became the 2023 Council of Sections Governing Board chair after being nominated by the COS Nominations Committee to run, and am now 2024-2026 ASA Vice President.*

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Beth Ann: What inspired you to become involved in the ASA, and how did you first get involved?

Bonnie: *My ASA involvement started as a graduate student. Like many students, I wanted to learn about statistical methods and applications, and learn more about potential career opportunities. The JSM career fair is great for that. After graduation, a RAND mentor encouraged me to join HPSS because of the work I was doing. This helped me meet many scientists working in health policy and broadened my exposure to the field. In terms of planning or leading an ASA activity, I served on the planning committee of ICHPS first. As a committee member, I organized an invited session on methods and another one on writing your first NIH proposal (including a program officer from NIH).*

Susan: *I joined the ASA when I was a graduate student, after I heard that several other students joined. It seemed like the thing to do! The faculty in my graduate program at Duke emphasized the importance and value of being involved in the statistics profession, so a student ASA membership was a great way to get started.*



Dr. Bonnie Ghosh



Dr. Susan Paddock

Beth Ann: What are some of the most rewarding experiences you have had as a leader in the ASA, and why are they meaningful to you?

Bonnie: *The ASA has given me exceptional opportunities to be a community organizer and as a leader. I have enjoyed improving section activities within HPSS. As the Program Chair, I collaborated with the Program Chair elect to re-locate the HPSS Mixer at JSM to an offsite venue so we could afford to host a reception with food, ticketed drinks, door prizes and raffle tickets at a restaurant nearby. The idea was to make it a fun and memorable mixer so people would want to come and stay! It was great to see the huge increase in attendance that year, and the format has continued to this day. As HPSS chair, I helped to establish the HPSS Mid-Career and Senior Awards. These activities were personally meaningful because of their impact to increase community engagement at JSM and recognize the scientific accomplishments of colleagues that I admired. Finally, as co-chair of ICHPS 2018, I wrote and won a first-time PCORI conference award – this helped us fund student awards, early career activities and even a science communication workshop that was very well received by attendees.*

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Susan: *I was part of HPSS's ASA Fellows Nominations committee for three years. It was immensely rewarding to celebrate and recognize the excellent accomplishments of our HPSS members. I also enjoyed being HPSS JSM Program chair and serving on the ICHPS program committee – it's rewarding to plan a meeting and to see people come together and benefit from a very well-planned program. I also was part of former ASA President Karen Kafadar's Impact Initiative, where we developed a webinar and article for Amstat News on statistical issues in automated driving systems to encourage statisticians to work in this new area.*

Beth Ann: **What were some of the challenges you faced as you progressed through the ranks of the ASA, and how did you overcome them?**

Bonnie: *I was lucky to have access to great mentors and opportunities (such as being nominated for Committees and HPSS positions). One challenge was never being sure what I was signing up for! For example, one never really understands the number of hours involved or has a detailed how-to manual for a position. Working in a soft-money environment at RAND, it can be stressful to agree to a position without knowing these things. Overall, HPSS is very well organized. Also, because it is a friendly group of people, I could reach out to individuals within the section who had served in the position before me to ask lots of questions, and they always shared helpful information. Finally, I realized that one flexibility offered is to personalize each position – so, I could customize roles to adapt to my passions.*

Susan: *So far, I have not found ASA involvement to pose daunting challenges. Many ASA roles are accompanied by documentation of the key responsibilities. I have also been fortunate that people with whom I have worked have made time to be helpful in my transitions. I have not ever felt stuck with a task no one else cared to do. The biggest challenge is there is always more to be done. I have had to learn how to take on a management level of commitment that allows for balance as well as making a meaningful contribution.*

Beth Ann: **How have you worked to build relationships and networks within the statistical community, and how have these relationships helped you to advance your career and leadership goals?**

Bonnie: *I think of the ASA as an extended statistical family. I have been very successful in building and maintaining friendships. I am a huge extrovert which helps. I would also assume that these relationships helped me get elected as ASA President.*

Susan: *Simply put, showing up for ASA events has helped. My main ASA touchpoints are sections tied to my methodological or substantive interests. I have made a point to give a talk at most JSMs, or to have a formal role such chairing a session or being a section officer. This has helped me build relationships within ASA. Having an official role or purpose at a meeting provided me helpful context for my networking. Networking also let people know more about the work I do and led to opportunities within and outside of ASA.*

Beth Ann: **How did you balance your professional responsibilities with your leadership roles in the ASA, and what strategies have you used to manage your time effectively?**

Bonnie: *This is something I struggle with – when I accept a position, I want to do something with it to have lasting impact for the group or society. That takes time – and a lot of thought. Yet, I must prioritize my employment over other commitments. Here is what I have found useful.*

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Bonnie: *First, I calendar certain hours of the week for ASA work. Second, I have learned that I cannot always say “yes”. I try to think have some fair rules/criteria on where I should say “yes” vs. “no.” When I say ‘no’, I often suggest someone else who would be excellent for the ask so not to leave folks hanging. I would say that I am not always successful at managing my time effectively. For example, as co-chair of ICHPS, I worked at certain points way too much. While it brought me joy, fulfillment and a sense of accomplishment, it is important to have a healthy balance between your employment, ASA activities, and time spent with family & friends”. Also, delegation is key – surround yourself with a network of colleagues and pass on the opportunity, if needed*

Susan: *When asked to do something interesting but there was a risk of overcommitting myself, I’ve sometimes replied with, “I would love to do that later,” which helped me avoid disappointing others and myself. Indeed, I was very often asked a second time to participate when timing was better for me. One thing I have not done, but might be useful to try, is to negotiate the size of an opportunity. For roles that take substantial time and have high profile such as being a journal editor, it’s important not to commit to too many of those at one time. Sometimes employers are able and willing to help by covering some portion of your time, especially if you can make a business case for the activity. I’ve appreciated that type of support in my own career. Regardless, expect to spend a significant amount of your own time on these efforts. The good news is that in my experience these activities are highly beneficial to one’s career in the long term.*

Beth Ann: **What are some of the key skills and qualities that you believe are important for statisticians who aspire to become leaders in the ASA?**

Bonnie: *Communication skills. Being kind and fair. Having a plan/vision for the position at hand. One year often goes by fast (for one-year terms).*

Susan: *ASA leaders have a passion for statistics in general, an interest in ASA’s role in advocating for our field, and in career development not only for oneself but more importantly for others as well. For those who share those values and have key skills --- such as being a good listener, being able to work with a group to develop a program or approach and following through on your commitments – there are numerous opportunities in ASA.*

Beth Ann: **What advice would you give to early career statisticians who are interested in becoming involved in the ASA, but are unsure of where or when to start?**

Bonnie: *I would start with joining a section and your local chapter. This will let you meet people and learning about them as well as the ASA community. You can also start by organizing a session at JSM or ICHPS, which is a great way to reach out and get to know your potential presenters (e.g., likely other ASA community members). You can chair a session – and meet people that way, too. You can also self-nominate for positions on the section that best fits your interests. Did you know that you can nominate yourself for a Committee through the ASA website? I like this approach. Important to share why you want to do it. Finally, let your peers and mentors know of a specific interests/passions and desire/time or availability to get more involved.*

Susan: *There is a student membership rate and JSM student mixer, so students can start there. Not only is it fun to meet other graduate students, but you might run into those people for decades to come - so it is also great networking. For early career non-students, join sections and go to section events. Volunteer to chair a session and/or speak at a conference. Let the HPSS leaders know if you’d like to do more. They can connect you to others who need your help. Subscribe to the ASA Community emails for your sections so you can learn of opportunities as they are announced.*

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JSM 2024
August 3-8, 2024
Portland, Oregon



Program Chair: Jason Brinkley Jason.Brinkley@abtassoc.com
Program Chair-Elect: Fatema Shafie fshafie@bu.edu

JSM 2024 will be held in Portland, Oregon from August 3-8, 2024. We are planning a full slate of activities, including invited sessions, our famous HPSS mixer, student paper competition winners, contributed sessions, round tables and our speaker with lunch. More details will be coming in the next newsletter but here are a few details we can share now:

Our four **HPSS-Sponsored Invited Sessions** are:

1. *From Clinical Equations to Health Equity: Let Statistics be the Bridge*
2. *Innovations in Measurement and Methods to Empower Health Equity*
3. *Translating Real-World Data into Effective and Equitable Health Care Decisions*
4. *Program and Policy Evaluation: The Role of the Statistician*

HPSS Mixer is tentatively scheduled for August 5 starting at 6:30 p.m. Location and details coming soon.

The program team needs your help! We are still on the hunt for a guest speaker for our HPSS luncheon. We also need chair volunteers for topic contributed sessions. If you have ideas or suggestions or want to volunteer, please email Jason.Scott.Brinkley@gmail.com

Events! Meetings! Dates! Deadlines!

[Webinar](#) – Charting Your Course: A Guide to Analyzing State Policy Studies Webinar, 12 pm – 2 pm (EST), January 23, 2024

[ENAR 2024](#) – Eastern North American Region, Baltimore, MD, March 10-13, 2024

[DISS 2024](#) – Duke-Industry Statistics Symposium, Durham, NC, April 3-5, 2024

[JSM 2024](#) – Joint Statistical Meetings, Portland, OR, August 3-8, 2024