

JRSA Electronic News

A monthly briefing for members

October 30, 2013

JRSA News

JRSA Officers Announced at Annual Business Meeting

The 2013-2014 officers of the JRSA Executive Committee were announced at the annual business meeting of state Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) Directors held on October 9. Because the meeting was conducted as a webinar, voting was accomplished by email ballots sent earlier to JRSA's independent bookkeeper to insure anonymity. The officers are **Stephen Haas, Ph.D.** (WV), President; **Janeena Wing** (ID), Vice President; **Lisa Shoaf, Ph.D.** (OH), Secretary/Treasurer; **Danette Buskovich** (MN) and **Mark Myrent** (IL), Delegates; and **Phillip Stevenson, Ph.D.** (AZ), Past President. In addition to the elected Executive Committee members, the JRSA president appoints a delegate who is not a SAC director to represent the broader community of members. President Haas announced that Roger Przybylski, President of RKP Group in Lakewood, CO will serve as Appointed Delegate. Look for more information on JRSA's board at <http://www.jrsa.org/about/excomm.html>.

Statistical Analysis Centers Win Awards for Outstanding Work

Each year JRSA recognizes excellence in the work of the state Statistical Analysis Centers in three areas: publications, websites, and innovation in the application of new technologies or analytical methods. The winners of the 2013 Douglas Yearwood National Publication Awards, which recognize outstanding efforts by SACs to publish useful and high quality reports, were the Colorado, Idaho, Vermont, and West Virginia SACs. Awards are given in two categories: Statistical/ Management and Research/Policy Analysis. In the Statistical/Management category, **West Virginia** won in the Large SAC division for *Improving State Capacity for Crime Reporting: An Exploratory Analysis of Data Quality and Imputation Methods Using NIBRS Data*, by Christina R. LaValle, Stephen M. Haas, Erica Turley, and James J. Nolan. In the small SAC division, the winner was **Vermont** for *An Analysis of Domestic Violence and Arrest Patterns in Vermont Using NIBRS Data*, by Robin Weber.

In the Research/Policy Analysis category, **Colorado** won the Large SAC division for *Analysis of Colorado State Board of Parole Decisions: FY 2012 Report*, by Kevin Ford, and **Idaho** won the Small SAC division for *Idaho State Police Performance Measurement: Plan for Redefining Success*, by Janeena Wing.

JRSA's Website Award recognizes excellence in utilizing the Web for the dissemination of justice data and research. Members of JRSA's SAC Website and Innovation Awards Committee are charged with selecting the winning website. The 2013 winner was the [West Virginia](#) SAC for a website that committee members said had "impressive scope and attention to detail."

The SAC Innovation Award recognizes originality in applying new technologies and analysis methods to the information needs of the justice community. The winners of the 2013 SAC Innovation Awards were **Illinois** for *Illinois Criminal History and Recidivism Analysis Tool*; **Vermont** for *VCJR-XCT: A Software Tool to Analyze XML-Encoded Criminal History Records*; and **West Virginia** for *Project IDA: Making Statistics Accessible through Interactive Data Analysis*.

SAC News

New SAC Directors Appointed in Maine and Nevada

George Shaler was appointed Director of the Maine SAC, which is located at the Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine. Mr. Shaler has been a Research Associate at the Muskie School since 1999, providing research, program evaluation, and consultation services to state and local government agencies and community-based organizations. He also provides technical assistance in evaluation capacity building to many Maine nonprofits. He is most interested in the public health aspects of criminal justice issues. While at the Muskie School, Mr. Shaler has researched or conducted program evaluations on juvenile recidivism, disproportionate minority contact, criminal history records, county jail trends, prison/jail health care issues, quality improvement in local health departments, and school-based health centers.

William Sousa is the newly appointed Director of the Nevada SAC, which is located in the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Dr. Sousa received his Ph.D. in criminal justice from Rutgers University in 2003. His past research projects include a study of crime reduction policies implemented by the New York City Police Department and an evaluation of police-led initiatives to improve safety in public parks in Los Angeles. In 2004 he joined the faculty at UNLV, where he has been involved in studies of police order-maintenance practices and community crime prevention in Las Vegas neighborhoods.

Arizona SAC and State Partners Honored for Work on Prescription Drug Abuse

The [Arizona Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative](#) received the [Outstanding Criminal Justice Program Award](#) during the National Criminal Justice Association National Forum held in Chicago, August 4-6. SAC Director Phillip Stevenson accepted the award on behalf of the numerous partners involved in the program, including the SAC. The award recognizes outstanding criminal justice programs that showcase successful promising practices in criminal justice. The programs selected must address important criminal justice issues; demonstrate effectiveness based upon the program's stated goals; be a good example of the use of federal funds to initiate a program that is subsequently supported through state and local appropriations or are self-sustaining; and be easy to replicate in other jurisdictions. The Arizona Initiative employs a multi-systemic approach to reduce misuse of prescription medication and the associated health and crime-related consequences. The program is currently underway in three pilot counties and employs five main strategies: 1) reduce illicit acquisition and diversion of prescription medications; 2) educate prescribers and pharmacists about best practices for controlled substances; 3) enhance prescription drug practice and policies in law enforcement; 4) increase public awareness about

the risks of prescription drug misuse; and 5) build resilience in children and adults. Once feasibility and efficacy are established, the plan is to replicate the program statewide.

Publications

September Issue of JRSA Forum Available

The latest issue of the [JRSA Forum](#) was recently made available on JRSA's website. This issue has a timely article examining challenges faced by the National Instant Check System (NICS) in securing appropriate and accurate information in the check process, especially in regards to mental health record sharing. Another article summarizes the findings of a two-year study of how one state's Department of Juvenile Corrections responded to a consent decree when it was found to be in violation of the law, and discusses difficulties encountered in sustaining the reforms made under federal oversight. There is also information about the formal affiliation between JRSA and the National Criminal Justice Association that became official this month.

DOJ Asserts Commitment to Scientific Integrity

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) this month released its [Scientific and Research Integrity Policy](#), which affirms the independence of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and National Institute of Justice (NIJ), as well as the Department's commitment to producing scientific materials that are free from political interference and policy advocacy. The policy is designed to promote and ensure the objectivity and independence of the Department's scientific endeavors, and lays out principles for maintaining and strengthening a culture of scientific validity and reliability.

White Paper Discusses Reentry and Employment Strategies

Employment providers already serve large numbers of individuals released from correctional facilities or who are required to find jobs as conditions of their probation or parole. Yet the corrections, reentry, and workforce development fields have lacked an integrated tool that draws on the best thinking about reducing recidivism and improving job placement and retention to guide correctional supervision and the provision of community-based services. [Integrated Reentry and Employment Strategies: Reducing Recidivism and Promoting Job Readiness](#) describes a new tool that draws on evidence-based practices and promising strategies that can be used as a starting point for cross-system collaborations to reduce reincarceration and unemployment among adults with criminal histories. Produced by the Council of State Governments Justice Center with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Bureau of Justice Assistance, this white paper is meant to facilitate discussions among systems professionals by introducing a tool that can provide a framework for coordinating all the systems necessary—criminal justice, workforce development, family services, health and human services, and social services—to achieve improved outcomes for individuals returning to their communities.

Announcements

BJS Promotes the International Year of Statistics

BJS is joining thousands of organizations in hundreds of countries to celebrate the International Year of Statistics (Statistics2013). [Statistics2013](http://www.statistics2013.org/) (<http://www.statistics2013.org/>) is an awareness campaign to increase public understanding of the power and impact of statistics in all aspects of society. The two major goals of the campaign are to 1) cultivate statistics as a profession, especially among young people, and 2) to promote creativity and development in the sciences of probability and statistics. BJS is planning several outreach activities to highlight careers in statistics and describe the uses of criminal justice statistics in our lives. Visit the [BJS Statistics2013](http://www.bjs.gov/content/iyos.cfm) (<http://www.bjs.gov/content/iyos.cfm>) webpage for the latest updates.