



# SAPOR NEWSLETTER

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**WINTER ISSUE**

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*Southern Association for Public Opinion Research*

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CONTACT US:

<http://southernassociationforpublicopinionresearch.org>

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**SARAH COOK, PRESIDENT**



Greetings to all and welcome to the New Year! I hope the holidays have given everyone a chance to slow down and relax a bit. Advancements in data collection methods and innovative new technologies bring promise that 2014 will be an exciting year in public opinion research. New research into big data and utilization of crowdsourcing has the potential to further alter the ever shifting landscape of the field we study. At the same time, advancements in CATI and CAPI technologies broaden and improve the capabilities of these widely adopted modes of data collection.

Of course, we cannot move forward without first thanking our outgoing SAPOR officers for all of their time and dedication to SAPOR:

- 2013 President - Michael Lawrence (GFK Custom Research, LLC)
- 2013 Conference Chair - Gretchen McHenry (RTI International)
- 2012/2013 Treasurer – Adam Sage (RTI International)

With the success of the 2013 SAPOR Conference and the stimulating research happening in our field, we eagerly look forward to this year's conference. The 2014 SAPOR Conference will take place on **October 9-10, 2014**. The exact location along with the official conference theme will be announced in the call for participation, which will be released in **April, 2014**. Your current SAPOR officers have already begun planning enticing new events and diverse sessions for this year's conference. Rest assured, the theme this year will encompass not only the changes occurring to the way we research, but also the way what we research is changing. I invite you to read this newsletter in its entirety to learn more about what SAPOR has in store this year. Also, be sure to check out your newly elected Executive Council members. This is going to be an exciting year!

## **REVIEW OF THE 2013 SAPOR CONFERENCE**

### **CHRISTINA TOUARTI, 2014 CONFERENCE CHAIR**

We held the 2013 SAPOR Conference this past October, and I am pleased to say it was another success! First, we would like to acknowledge Gretchen McHenry, the 2013 Conference Chair, and the many conference volunteers who contributed to coordinating this effort. Many thanks to all of you!



The conference began Thursday morning with a short course by Mansour Fahimi from GfK on Dual-Frame RDD Survey Methodology. Following the course, we had presentations covering many topics such as survey operations and technologies as well as the funding of survey research. Our afternoon finished with an invited panel discussion featuring Dr. J Michael Dennis of GfK, Dr. Charles DiSogra of Abt SRBI, Dr. Zhang Wang of Avar Consulting Inc., Rachel Casper of RTI International, and Dr. Paul Biemer of the Odum Institute. Moderated by Michael Lawrence, the panel covered many aspects on the future of public opinion research. A special thanks to all our panelists for this informative and insightful discussion!

The conference continued on Friday with another short course by Natasha Stevens of GfK on Digital Data Collection Methods. This was followed by several more presentations on questionnaire design and political opinion research. In the afternoon, closing remarks were made and the gavel passed on to the 2014 President, Sarah Cook.

We especially want to take a moment to thank our sponsors for the 2013 annual conference. We are grateful for the kindness and support of RTI International, GfK Custom Research, Avar Consulting Inc, Headway Workforce Solutions, and the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research. Their generous contributions allowed us to offer a high-quality professional conference at an affordable price to attendees.

The enthusiasm and collaboration of our SAPOR members in 2013 was inspiring, and can only mean that even better things are to come for SAPOR in 2014. We hope to see you all at our annual conference this Fall as we continue to improve the experience for our members!

## **2014 JAMES W. PROTHRO STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION**

As in past years, the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at UNC-Chapel Hill invites submissions to the 2014 James W. Prothro Student Paper Competition. Students from anywhere in the United States may submit a paper. The competition, held in conjunction with the Southern Association for Public Opinion Research conference, recognizes excellence in student-authored research related to public

opinion and survey research, broadly defined. A \$250 award is given to the best student paper. The competition is named in honor of the late Dr. James W. Prothro, the noted political scientist who served as director of the Odum Institute from 1967 to 1973. Details on the paper competition can be found on our website.

## **WELCOME NEW SAPOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**DAVE BERGERON, SECRETARY**

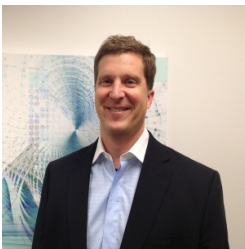


Elections were held at the 2013 SAPOR Conference last October for three newly vacated positions on the Executive Council. Thanks to all of our members who participated in the election, whether they nominated someone, accepted a nomination, or cast their ballots in the election. We appreciate your active participation in this process!

We would first like to extend our thanks and heartfelt gratitude to the SAPOR members who are transitioning out of their roles. Many thanks to Gretchen McHenry, for her unwavering dedication in the role of Conference Chair; Adam Sage, for his diligent attention to detail as our recent Treasurer; and to Michael Lawrence, whose keen leadership skills made him exemplary in his former position as SAPOR President.

As we begin 2014 and launch our plans for the annual conference in 2014, we would like to take the time to welcome and congratulate our new Executive Council members. We are very excited to welcome them to the leadership team in the roles of Vice-President/President Elect, Conference Vice-Chair, and Treasurer.

### **KARL FELD, VICE-PRESIDENT/PRESIDENT ELECT**



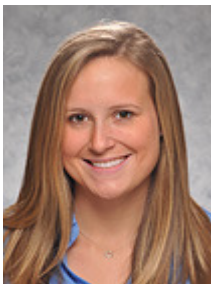
Karl joined GfK in 2012. He began his career in technical programming for non-profit organizations in transitioning societies of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He transitioned to applied research with a focus in public policy and social issues, strategic communications and program evaluation and has since worked for non-profit, commercial and government research organizations. Karl has delivered consultative research reporting and operations management in over 70 countries including on-the-ground work in war zones and repressive states, during revolutions, and in response to humanitarian disasters. Karl earned an MA from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and is pursuing a PhD in Communications at North Carolina State University. He has received numerous awards, has held association positions in AAPOR and elsewhere, and is internationally published. Karl is looking forward to using the unique character of our Southern membership to energize SAPOR in new ways.

**CHRIS JEWETT, CONFERENCE VICE-CHAIR**



Chris Jewett is a data collection specialist at RTI International's Division of Research Services in Research Triangle Park NC. Chris currently serves as a Regional Supervisor on the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. He has experience in field operations including managing field staff, monitoring field observations, training field interviewers, and assisting with client deliverables. Chris holds a BA in Psychology and a MA in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from East Carolina University. He has been an active member and volunteer since 2008. Chris is interested in strengthening the connections between researchers and practitioners and creating a more collaborative environment within the organization.

**KATRINA LADD, TREASURER**



Katrina Ladd joined RTI International in 2012 as a survey specialist. She has experience in project management and data collection, specifically managing project budget and labor forecasts, managing data quality follow-up activities, developing materials for and analyzing data from key informant interviews, and assisting with client deliverables. Katrina holds a BA in Psychology and a BA in International Affairs from Lafayette College in Easton, PA. Katrina is looking forward to her new role as SAPOR Treasure and to next year's annual SAPOR conference.

**SAPOR MEMBERS - WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!  
DAVE BERGERON, SECRETARY**

As always, we hope to connect with all of our SAPOR members on a regular basis and not rely only upon our annual conference as a way to catch up with you. Please consider sending us updates throughout the year so that we can highlight your accomplishments and share information about your research activities with other SAPOR members.

Our Executive Council members are here to serve you, so always feel free to contact any of us with questions or suggestions for improving and growing our organization. You can also find out more about SAPOR on our website. Be sure to check in every now again for conference updates, calls for papers, networking and volunteering opportunities, and more!

In the coming months volunteers from our chapter may reach out to you by phone or email to discuss how you would like to see our chapter grow. Watch for those emails for phone calls!

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