

Rob Santos' Candidate Statement for ASA President

I'm just a kid (albeit much older) from a San Antonio barrio with two career passions -- statistics and helping people. I like adventure, too, so over the years I took some chances, and here I am: ready to help you.

I think big and creatively, offering half-crazy ideas to provoke thoughtful deliberation. I value teamwork above individualism because I find it typically yields richer results. Parts of my career were as an isolated statistician; it allowed me to focus on and value ASA membership. I've worked hard at increasing ASA member diversity and helping us understand its immense value to our profession. I've found a home in public policy research, consulting, mentoring and working on teams to improve our society.

As potential ASA president, I offer the following for your consideration:

Strategic reflection. ASA offers a big tent, but we yearn to attract and retain young professionals as well as students not just from Statistics Departments. In a global and digital world, let's reconsider what an association should be in contemporary society. In turn, this will motivate who our member base is and what ASA membership means, thus reinforcing our cultural relevance. I will work with you to develop this vision.

Building community from sections. ASA has sections, many devoted to a specific statistical application. I would promote synergies by fostering cross-section activities so that members learn from each other. This could be through special invited sessions, workshops, hackathons or other more engaging activities at JSM, CPS or chapter events. We have an opportunity to cross fertilize and this will build a stronger sense of community.

Increasing support of member-based work. ASA enjoys a broad membership across many disciplines. Membership strengths lie in increasing diversity, global reach and expanding areas of application. As a board member, I witnessed firsthand the leadership of our sections, chapters, committees, and caucuses. As president, I'd advocate for additional support to committees, sections and chapters, including a broad ranging assessment to identify scalable initiatives and programs (best practices) that might otherwise slide off our radar.

Adding critical thinking. Statisticians often work in teams and can be the wise advisor via critical thinking. It's irresponsible to just to crank out a sample size, model or p-value on demand. ASA offers related programs in leadership, communications, etc., plus CSP short courses. I'd canvass these to create a pilot training focusing specifically on the role of critical thinking for statisticians in project teams.

Promoting equity. My experience on the Sexual Harassment and Assault Task Force has been profound. Equity cannot be taken for granted. Our members deserve a safe and nurturing place to learn and grow, both at ASA events and at work. I will work so that all members are empowered and enjoy ASA benefits regardless of sex, gender, color, age, religion, origin, or disability.

As a leader. I've devoted much of my career to serving the statistical community, serving on both the ASA and WSS Boards of Directors. I held numerous committee and section officer positions since joining

in 1977, receiving ASA Fellow and Founder's Award. I've served as president of a sister organization, AAPOR. I've worked in academic and commercial research organizations and heavily participated in government service, e.g., study sections, federal committees, NAS panels; I serve on the NCHS Board of Scientific Counselors. I understand the myriad perspectives and diverse backgrounds of our members. As an executive officer, I embrace stewardship and decision making motivated by values, mission and fidelity to strategic plan. I make tough decisions as needed, but with compassion. It would be the honor of a lifetime to serve you. It would be a labor of love, and service with humility.