



Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association Spring 2005, Newsletter

The February 24-25, 2005, meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association held on the campus of The University of Alabama was a great success. Throughout the program the membership and friends of the A-MSA were treated to a variety of panels, workshops, posters and paper sessions. This was the kind of professional meeting that combined theoretical and applied aspects of the sociological enterprise, and each session served to stimulate collegial exchange and challenge. Counted among guests of the association include Professor Emeritus J. Kenneth Davidson, Sr., the Plenary Address speaker, Dr. Michael Hughes, President of the Southern Sociological Society, Dr. Carla Howery, Deputy Director of the American Sociological Association, and Mr. Stephen F. Black, a practicing lawyer and President of IMPACT: An Alabama Student Service Initiative, who offered an inspiring Address at the Thursday evening banquet. In addition, the banquet attendees were treated to the delightful music of the University of Alabama Jazz Combo who performed during the President's Reception and during a portion of the banquet. The banquet was a gala affair and for this I express a special appreciation to my wife Peggy who, with the assistance of our local arrangements committee, orchestrated this marvelous event.

A special feature of the 2005 program was the large book display in which thirteen publishing companies and the ASA were represented. To further highlight this portion of the program, several authors reacted to those who perused and later took possession of the large number of books and journals on display with authors providing anecdotal commentary regarding their specific publications and professional activities. As noted in the program, three of these companies donated money to off-set a portion of the cost incurred for the refreshments made available to the attendees throughout the course of the meeting. Such support is not only appreciated, but it also serves as an indicator of the appeal small organizational meetings such as A-MSA have during this period of economic challenge experienced within the publishing industry. We hope this kind of support continues in the future.

The success of the 2005 program is attributed to the contributions of any individuals, especially the program participants. A number of these participants are affiliated with the University of Alabama and represent various academic and applied programs, but each is an earnest and worthy student of the sociological perspective. I also was impressed by the presence of a number of Junior College colleagues who, for the first time, experienced the ambiance of A-MSA. In addition to the participants and other program registrants a great deal of support was received from throughout the University of Alabama community. Although these individuals and offices were recognized in the annual program, I again want to express my sincere appreciation to all who contributed their time, talent, and resources to ensure sociology was well represented at our University and that the program was a worthwhile experience.

Finally, I appreciate having the opportunity to serve sociology and the A-MSA and to be a small part of this wonderful group of academicians. Given the fine group of new board members who began their work at the February 25, 2005 meeting, the future holds great promise for our two-state association. I look forward to assisting Gary Long and Elise Lake of The University of Mississippi to ensure the success of the 2006 program.

Dennis L. Peck
Immediate Past President



Courtesy of Faculty Resource Center Imaging Services

Quad Area: The University of Alabama

Well, the environment did not appear exactly like the picture presented above, but almost so. Spring was certainly on the horizon as the February 24-25, 2005 A-MSA meeting convened on the campus of The University of Alabama. This was a wonderful event culminating in the Thursday evening President's Reception and the banquet during which three eminent speakers were featured and numerous students were honored for their participation in the 36th annual meeting. In addition, a long-time friend of the association, Dr. Donald W. Bogie, was honored with the Distinguished Service Award.

Student Paper Awards

One of the highlights of the annual banquet is the undergraduate and graduate student paper awards. Because of the rather large number of entries at the undergraduate level it was suggested that three awards would be appropriate and the Student Paper Awards Committee agreed to do so. The undergraduate level the award winners are:

Third place award winner: **Courtney Blair** of Auburn University, Montgomery; Paper entitled "A Comparative Study of Sexuality Among Rural and Urban College Students".

Second place award winner: **Rebecca Hanson** of the University of Montevallo; Paper entitled "Duct Tape, Eyeliner, and High Heels: Ethnography of a Drag Show".

First place award winner: **Madeline Sims** of Milsaps College; Paper entitled "Historical and Current Analysis on the Impact of Religion and Abortion Attitudes in the 2004 Election".

Graduate student paper award went to **Marvin Corbett** of Auburn University for a paper entitled "Hotbeds for Hate Groups: Competition Theory Used in an Analysis of Alabama, California, Florida and Texas Counties."

Each award winner received a bag filled with items donated by various components of the University of Alabama and gifts provided by Tuscaloosa city merchants. In addition, the first place winners received a check in the amount of fifty dollars.

We have an On-Line Journal and there is a Call for Manuscripts

The newly created on line journal, A-MSA on-line Sociological Review edited by Gary Long, is looking for a few good manuscripts. Intended as a scholarly journal for the dissemination of the work of faculty and student alike, A-MSA is now a leader among state associations in creating this unique forum. Look up the journal on the internet and support your association journal by encouraging students and colleagues to submit their work for evaluation by what promises to be an outstanding board of editorial advisers (www.olemiss.edu/pubs/AMSA/index.htm).

A-MSA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR A DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE

Dr. Donald W. Bogie of Auburn University, Montgomery



A distinguished individual was honored by the association at the Thursday evening banquet. Dr. Donald Bogie, a gentleman and a scholar, a long-time A-MSA member, former president of the association, and currently a most conscientious A-MSA Archivist, is the 2005 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. The following statement was presented on behalf of Dr. Bogie at the February 24, 2005 banquet.

He lives in Wetumpka, Alabama, he came to us via Kentucky. He has been a full Professor for almost as long as I have been a part of the State of Alabama community. Although skilled enough to teach, research, and publish in many areas of sociology, he is yet another example of a sociologist whose work crosses over into areas that are interdisciplinary in nature, especially that of demography. And in his long-time role as Director of the Center for Demographic and Cultural Research at Auburn University, Montgomery he has become the most often cited Alabama sociologist I can identify. He is great copy for a number of large Alabama newspapers, radio, and television stations. Despite his data gathering, storage, and retrieval skills, despite his publishing efforts, and despite his success at grant writing, there are some individuals whose recognition goes well beyond name recognition that is based on a wide-variety of teaching, research, and community service contributions. And although one can speak at length about this individual's contributions to a community of scholars, a university community, as well as local, state and regional communities, there a few instances when a different kind of recognition also is appropriate. Although I do not intend to suggest such recognition is totally divorced from one's academic role, the special nature of contributions to lend support for and provide the essential stewardship on behalf of a professional association, a stewardship that allows the rest of us the luxury of participation on a yearly basis. This is obviously a labor of love that too often goes unrecognized. So many individuals contribute to professional associations over the years. Often these individual contributions are highly visible; at a later point in time these service related contributions may be masked by the low-profile nature of the task as well as the low-profile of the individual.

On occasion, not often mind you, but on occasion the A-MSA membership takes note by recognizing the merits of a candidate for one of two Awards, namely the Distinguished Service Award and the Outstanding Achievement Award. Tonight the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association recognizes one of its own with the

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD.

The award was presented to Dr. Bogie by Past President and Chair of the Committee for Awards, Dr. Duane Gill.

Call for A-MSA Archival Material

At the last meeting of the general membership Donald W. Bogie requested that anyone in possession of A-MSA material who would be interested in placing such material in the archives is most welcome to contact him. You can make contact with our archivist at dbogie@mickey.aum.edu or by telephone at 334/244-3388.

Election of New A-MSA Officers

The vitality of an organization may be evaluated in light of the responsiveness of its members to serve in the important decision making roles. In this area the A-MSA membership continues to demonstrate a strong commitment. Newly elected A-MSA officers are as follows:

President-Elect: Kim Brackett, Auburn University, Montgomery (kbracket@mail.aum.edu)

Secretary: Professor Alma Calix, Hinds Community College (AJCalix@hindsc.edu)

Treasurer: Clark Hudspeth, Jacksonville State University (Hudspeth@jsucc.jsu.edu)

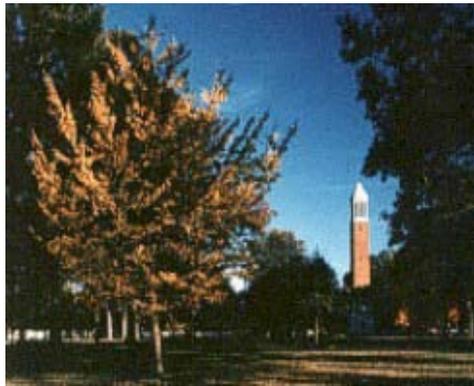
Members-at-Large:

State of Alabama, Carolyn Pevey, Auburn University, Montgomery (cpevey@mail.aum.edu)

State of Mississippi, Mahasin Owens-Sabir, Jackson State University (owenssabir@hotmail.com)

Communications Director: Tom Kersen, University of North Alabama (tmkersen@una.edu)

Congratulations to each of you on your recent election and thank you to all for stepping forward to serve the needs of our association. Your future efforts will undoubtedly serve to enhance the image of A-MSA.



Denny Chimes on the Quad

2005 A-MSA Program Development Committee Report, by Darren Surman

The 2005 conference of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association convened on February 24th and 25th at the Bryant Conference Center on The University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa. The conference, with a theme entitled, "A Positive Sociology", enjoyed a wonderful show of support and participation throughout its proceedings from both student and faculty participants.

The two day event, hosted by A-MSA President, Dr. Dennis Peck, provided a wide range of opportunities to hear works of sociology from the two-state area with its thirty sessions of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty paper sessions, workshops and roundtable discussions. The conference began at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, and after fifteen sessions, concluded with a plenary address given by Dr. J. Kenneth Davidson, Sr., Professor Emeritus from The University of Wisconsin, an informal meeting with Dr. Carla Howery of the American Sociological Association, and the President's Reception and banquet in Smith Hall on The University of Alabama campus. The banquet was catered by Tisha's Cubbard and music was provided by The University of Alabama Jazz Combo, led by Mr. Daniel Western. Speakers at the banquet included Dr. Carla Howery of the ASA, Mr. Stephen Foster Black of the law firm Maynard, Cooper & Gale, P.C., who spoke on "The Future of Progressive Public Policy in the South, and Dr. Michael Hughes, president of The Southern Sociological Society, with an address entitled "Alabama Sociology: My Personal Journey". The banquet concluded with recognition of undergraduate and graduate student papers and the awarding of the "Best Student Paper Awards" as well as the awarding of the Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Donald Bogie.

Friday's proceedings again provided fifteen sessions, but were more heavily weighted this day with faculty presentations, while two undergraduate student paper sessions rounded out the student participation for the conference. The conference ended successfully with the dual spirit of excitement and commitment to next year's upcoming meeting as President, Dr. Dennis Peck passed the torch to the new President- Gary Long of The University of Mississippi. We all look forward to Dr. Long's capable leadership and another wonderful academic gathering of the A-MSA association next year.

Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association
Executive Committee Meeting
University of Alabama
February 24, 2005
8:00 a.m.

Present:

Dennis Peck, President
Gary Long, President-Elect
Duane Gill, Past President
Don Bogie, Archivist
Bent Hales
Elise Lake**
John Green

Stacy Ruth, Secretary
Craig Robertson, Treasurer
John Dunkelberger
Charles Faupel
Larry Hall
Tom Pette**
** non-member of the Committee

President Dennis Peck called the meeting to order.

The first matter was to review and approve the minutes from the 2004 mid-year meeting in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and the minutes documenting an internet vote on two motions made by Peck for the purchasing of plaques. A motion was made to accept the minutes and the motion carried.

President's Report

Peck noted there were many stores, vendors, and book representatives who extended contributions to the conference. The book vendors will allow the books on display to be taken at the end of the conference on Friday. Both Dr. Kenneth Davidson and Dr. Carla Howery traveled to Tuscaloosa at their own expense. If finances allow at the end of the conference, there is a request for an honorarium.

There will be three certificates for undergraduate papers and one for the graduate competition. The banquet will be held at the Alabama Museum of Natural History. There is a guarantee of 120 for the dinner with 112 paid.

Peck made note that several contacts were made to colleges who had not participated in conferences in the recent past to rejoin the organization. Jackson State will have ten students and Miles College will have nine students participating this year along with several other colleges.

President Peck also wanted feedback on the adding of early sessions and the later sessions on Friday.

E-Journal

Peck recognized Gary Long with information on the progression of the e-journal. Long announced that we still needed a name for the journal and that the journal may be officially accepting papers in three to four weeks. Peck thanked Long for taking the initiative in helping to develop this important step for this organization.

Procedures Manual

Peck encouraged all who have specific responsibilities on the executive committee to please document those for the newly elected members. This will allow for greater continuity in the transition.

Recruitment

Peck stated that Carolyn Pevey had done an excellent job in contacting schools personally by phone, creating a flyer to mail to each school and emailing respondents. Due to her hard work and the work of others, we have a large number of participants from schools who have not been represented in a long time. Craig Robertson and Marc Matre also assisted in contacting schools.

Spring Newsletter

President Peck requested from the committee and guests to please submit any information to the newsletter for publication in the Spring. This newsletter will have a focus on Don Bogie and his work at the Auburn University Montgomery. It will also focus on Delta State University and its programs.

Finances

Peck brought forth the question of whether we need to increase the rate of dues by \$5 or perhaps, more. Hales suggested that we may need to continue to raise dues by \$5 increments yearly and not by a large amount at one time. Pette suggested that the committee consider implementing institutional memberships. By offering a membership for \$100 to a university/college, it may encourage recruiting. Bogie stated this may not be feasible for all schools. Hall suggested that with this membership, the organization could offer advertisements for graduate schools on its website and newsletters. Dunkelberger expressed concern that it may be difficult to find someone who is willing to accept the leadership position on this project.

Brent Hales made a motion that for the next year that registration dues be raised \$5 for both faculty and students. Faupel seconded and the motion passed.

A second motion was made that we consider institutional memberships for four year institutions with stand alone programs for \$100. The discussion was tabled due to time constraints.

Meeting was adjourned.

**Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association
Executive Committee Meeting
University of Alabama
February 24, 2005
12:00 p.m.**

Present:

Dennis Peck, President
Gary Long, President-Elect
Duane Gill, Past President
Don Bogie, Archivist
Bent Hales
Elise Lake
Gladys Lyles

Stacy Ruth, Secretary
Carolyn Pevey
Ming Tsui
Charles Faupel
Larry Hall
John Green

President Dennis Peck called the meeting to order.

Discussion resumed concentrating on institutional memberships. Hall suggested that someone contact department chairs in order not to alienate smaller schools. Tsui believes that her school may would be willing to support this due to the fact that graduate programs will recruit students from Millsaps. Gill suggested that we could sale advertisements for the E-journal. Peck reminded the group that we want to maintain the intimacy and nurturing of the organization. Ruth reminded the committee that one time we discussed investing the money into an interest drawing checking account. Tsui also suggested that we encourage graduates to donate to the organization when their studies are complete.

Ruth repeated the original motion:

We consider institutional memberships for four year institutions with stand alone programs for \$100 per year. A vote was taken and the motion was opposed.

A new motion was made to offer clarity:

The executive committee work to create an institutional membership at \$100 per year by contacting the chairpersons of the university/colleges, as well as, research institutions. The motion was seconded and passed.

Meeting was adjourned.

**Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association
Business Session
University of Alabama
February 25, 2005**

President Dennis Peck called the meeting to order.

Program Development Committee

Peck recognized Darren Surman to give the report. Surman stated there were a wide range of opportunities for students to participate - 49 undergraduates, 15 graduates, and 62 professionals. Also, outgoing members of the executive committee were recognized for their service at the banquet and Don Bogie received the Distinguished Service Award.

Secretary Report

Copies of the minutes were distributed. Stacy Ruth reported that the minutes were reviewed by the executive committee yesterday and there were no noted corrections. The motion was made to accept the minutes and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Copies of the financial report were distributed. Craig Robertson gave the association's financial report. The association is doing well and is financially secure. For the first time the organization had a balance of \$6000.00. This was due to the participation of members preregistering. Robertson made note on the report that there is a \$2 charge to have the checks sent back to the treasurer but this allowed for clarification if necessary. The final count tells us there were several schools, Troy State, Shelton State, and University of Alabama- Huntsville, participating for the first time or after a long absence. There were approximately 130 actual registrants and this is an increase from last year. Upon paying final bills, the account total will be approximately \$5133.61. A motion was made to accept the report and it was seconded and approved.

Archivist Report:

Don Bogie was recognized to give his report. Selwyn Hollingsworth presented his records to the association. John Dunkelberger has also donated his notes and records from his presidency. The early records are housed at Mississippi State. From 1985-88 there are missing records and 1989-1993 the records are very limited. If you have any records, please donate them.

Membership Committee

Carolyn Pevey was recognized to give the report. She stated that a flyer was mailed to each institution in Alabama and Mississippi. Many were personally contacted via email or phone calls. A motion was made to accept the report and it was passed.

Publications Committee

Larry Hall reported that he was willing to archive the papers that were presented until the electronic journal was up and running and that Gary Long would report more specifics on the journal. A motion was made to accept the report and it was passed.

Nominations Committee

Peck reported for Xiaohe Xu. There was a call for nominations from the floor. There were none. A motion was made to close the nominations, it was seconded and passed. Ballots were distributed to members to vote. The ballots were tallied by Brent Hales and Craig Robertson.

New Business

Electronic Journal:

Gary Long was recognized to present information. The address for the journal will be <www.olemiss.edu/pubs/amsa/index.htm>. The journal should be ready to accept papers in two to three weeks. Tom Pettee volunteered to serve as an editor and there is a need for more volunteers. There is also a need to name the journal. A handout was passed out to members and Long asked for suggestions. Gill suggested that a history of the AMSA be on the website. Pettee agreed to review and evaluate the legal issues dealing with the formal copyright agreement.

Election Results:

Peck recognized Hales to announce the results of the voting.
President -Elect: Kim Brackett (Auburn University Montgomery)
At-Large Representative from AL: Carolyn Pevey (Auburn University Montgomery)
At-Large Representative from MS: Mahasin Owens-Sabir (Jackson State University)
Communications Director: Tom Kersen (University of North Alabama)
Treasurer: Clark Hudspeth (Jacksonville State University)
Secretary: Alma Calix (Hinds Community College)

Peck then presented the new president, Gary Long, from the University of Mississippi. Long first congratulated Peck for his impeccable job in his leadership of this organization and for a wonderful conference. Long presented Peck with a plaque commemorating his service to the AMSA. Long then officially invited everyone to plan to attend the 2006 meeting in Oxford. Upon asking if there was any final business, Brent Hales was recognized. Hales brought forth the motion from the executive committee to raise registration dues \$5 for both faculty and students. The motion was seconded and approved.

Meeting was adjourned.

Meet the 2005 - 2006 President of the A-MSA

Gary L. Long, Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Research Professor at the Center for Population Studies, has been a faculty member at the University of Mississippi since 1976. He earned the Ph.D. and M.A. degrees in sociology from SUNY, Stony Brook (1979 and 1973, respectively). He holds a B.A. in economics, with honors, from California State University at Sacramento (1968). He served in the U.S. Air Force as an air traffic controller.

Gary has taught at four institutions; namely CSUS, Stony Brook, UCLA, University of Mississippi. His teaching interests are theory, social psychology, social change, social stratification, social problems, death and dying, sociology of literature, introductory, and the Vietnam War. His research interests range from the sociology of literature, the professions, and professional ethics, to the Vietnam War, identity, and the distinctions between traditional and modern society. He has published in *The American Sociologist*, *Social Forces*, *Teaching Sociology*, *Sociology and Social Research*, *Contemporary Sociology*, *The Southern Quarterly* and *The Texas Review*, and contributed to anthologies in philosophy and on literature. He is area chair of the Literature and Society sessions of the American Culture Association. Gary is a member of the honor societies in economics and sociology.

Gary is an amateur photographer. Married to Donna J. Long since 1968, they have two sons, Robert who resides in Colorado and Thomas of New Mexico.

Editor's Note: Thank you Mr. President. We look forward to working with you to ensure the best program in the history of the A-MSA will convene in Oxford, MS during February 2006.

Focus on Sociology at Auburn University, Montgomery: The Center for Demographic Research

Perhaps it is most appropriate that at the time a distinguished professor from Auburn University, Montgomery is honored by the A-MSA that focus is also cast toward a critical component of that institution.

Center for Demographic Research, Auburn University Montgomery

by Don Bogie, Director and Founder (1981) of the Center

The first opportunity for statewide recognition of the Center for Demographic Research occurred in 1983 when Alabama's largest newspaper, *The Birmingham News*, referred to us as "a kind of shoe-box operation." To be thought of in such terms was a serious blow to our self-esteem, but the reporter was absolutely correct. The Center for Demographic Research had been established only two years earlier and was continuing to operate out of a 96 square-foot office, with only a part-time demographer and secretary, and just a few dollars to spend on assorted office supplies. To put it bluntly, we were "living on the edge" and prospects for rising above our impoverished condition were uncertain at best.

The first two publications, a statewide report on population changes during the 1970s and the first edition of the *Alabama Population Data Sheet*, both appeared in 1983. Somewhat unexpectedly we were thrust upon the Alabama demographic landscape, especially as a result of the data sheet. It was patterned after the Population Reference Bureau's World Population Data Sheet. But instead of population information for countries, we reported 28 columns of statistical data on Alabama's 67 counties, all presented in a colorful, wall-chart format. That is what caught the attention of *The Birmingham News* and a number of the state's other media outlets nearly a quarter of a century ago. In fact, the initial data sheet was so well received that we decided to make it a regular publication of the Center. Our next *Population Data Sheet* (scheduled for release later in 2005, will be our 12th, of which about 4,000 copies will be distributed.

Virtually no one would talk with us about money or contracts back during the early days of the Center. Finally, based on personal contacts and a healthy dose of begging, we were able to secure a couple of small grants from sympathetic, "angelic" sources.* These, along with gradually increasing financial support from the University, enabled us to get our fledgling publication program underway. Our aim, as stated on the margin of the first *Data Sheet*, was "to provide Alabama citizens with descriptive, interpretative reports, along with other types of information, concerning various facets of the state's population."

Now, 22 years after these two initial publications, we have produced more than thirty monographs and data sheets, along with numerous technical reports. In addition to the *Population Data Sheet* (published biennially), thematic data sheets on education, health, and children also are released periodically. The longer reports have been topical in nature and have addressed such subjects as aging, education, infant mortality, general mortality patterns, Alabama's Black Belt region, and birth and fertility patterns. Perhaps the most popular report to date, (other than the *Alabama*

Population Data Sheet, is *The Black Male in Alabama*, produced in 1988. All of the Center's publications are distributed free of charge to the public.

As a result of our publication program, which has always been our central focus, the visibility of the Center gradually increased over the years. While no one showed an interest in our contract and grant proposals early on, gradually people began to engage our services. Since 1981, approximately \$1.4 million has flowed through the Center, including contact and grant work with such diverse groups as BellSouth, Exxon Education Foundation, City of Montgomery, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, VOICES for Alabama's Children, Alabama Department of Mental Health, the Centers for Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention (Department of Health and Human Services), among others.

Particularly gratifying, in addition to the money that the Center's projects have brought into the state, is the "deliverables" that these projects have generated. These include three editions of the *Alabama Substance Abuse Data Book* and several editions of the *Alabama Kids Count Data Book*, both widely distributed across the state. Based on our experience, the key to successful competition in the contract/grant arena is visibility and a proven track record. In our case, it took several years to cultivate these attributes.

In addition to publications and contract and grants, the third major area of activity for the Center is supplying population-related information to the general public. Our first call for information coincided with the first mention of the Center in the media back in 1983 and there have been thousands of calls since that time. We typically process 25-30 requests for information each month, with a yearly total approaching 300. Some require very little time (a reporter who wants to know how many children are below the poverty level in Montgomery County) while others can take several hours (a Head Start agency needing data for a neighborhood needs assessment). Most data requests take 45 minutes or less to process and provide good training in data retrieval for student workers and a constant workout for the rest of the staff. Unless the data requests require an inordinate amount of time, they are filled free of charge.

Some of the requests that we have received over the years are only peripherally related to demography, including inquiries about the number of cemeteries in the state and the number of homeless animals in Alabama. Then, there was the director of a local social-service agency who needed to provide morning refreshments for 200 guests. He didn't know how much juice, coffee, tea, and cola to purchase and asked us to provide estimates of how much of each might be consumed. There are some requests that challenge our capabilities!

Twenty-four years after its founding, the Center for Demographic Research is no longer a "shoe-box operation." We've moved on to new, more spacious living quarters, have full-time staff members, and a budget that is infinitely larger than the one we started with nearly 25 years ago. But we have not turned into a "Wal-Mart box operation" either, nor do we have aspirations for doing so. We just strive to keep it simple and remain true to our original calling—providing the people of Alabama with the best information we can with regard to the state's changing population.

* The "angels" are Bonnie Fuller and Joe McInnes. Ms. Fuller is a career employee with the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and directs the state's Appalachian Regional Commission Program. Mr. McInnes had a stellar career as an executive with Blount International, Inc., and is now Director of the Alabama Department of Transportation and a member of the Governor's Cabinet. The reporter who referred to us as a "shoe-box operation" was Stan Bailey. Mr. Bailey, a fine journalist and even finer gentleman, continues to write articles for the *Birmingham News*.

Important News and Activities in the A-MSA Region

From Jacksonville State University by David G. LoConto

Effective July 1, 2005, Dr. Hugh McCain will be retiring from the Department of Sociology and Social Work. Dr. McCain is finishing his 30th year with the school and department. He has been a tireless worker, organizing our annual career fair; heading Alpha Kappa Delta as well as the Sociology Club; and publishing on a variety of topics, including marriage and the family. He and his wife Gail have bought a home in Mobile and will be relocating this summer. We all wish he and Gail the very best.

Effective August 1, 2005, Dr. Tina Deshotels will be joining the Department of Sociology and Social Work. Dr. Deshotels earned her Ph.D. from Florida State University. Throughout her academic career she has conducted research with Jill Quadagno, Craig Forsythe, and Jackie Eller among others. We are looking forward to the contributions she will bring to the department, as well as her commitment to the MSSA and the A-MSA.

The Sociology program has experienced a tremendous amount of growth the past three years with an 80% increase in majors. We are looking forward to that trend continuing.

From Spring Hill College by Larry Hall

Sociology Major at Spring Hill College Reactivated

After a hiatus of ten years the sociology major at Spring Hill College, a Jesuit, liberal arts college located in Mobile, Alabama, is being reactivated effective the fall 2005 term. Based on the fact Spring Hill College stands firmly in support of social justice the reinstatement of sociology lends itself to this essential College mission.

Teaching Sociology Website Based on 2005 A-MSA Workshop

Dr. Larry D. Hall, Spring Hill College, presented a workshop "Using Active Learning in the Introduction to Sociology Course" at the 2005 A-MSA meeting held in Tuscaloosa at the University of Alabama. Significant parts of the resources for this hands-on workshop can be found on the URL website

<http://ntserver.shc.edu/faculty/hall/www/amsa05at.htm>. This PowerPoint format can be viewed as well as printed. In addition to briefly discussing the components of learning and why this method can be effective, reviews of texts and exercises that promote active learning in the Introductory Sociology course also is available.

Delta State University Center for Culture and Learning by Luther Brown

The Delta State University Center for Culture and Learning is an interdisciplinary center is charged with promoting understanding of the rich historical and cultural significance of the Mississippi Delta (see <http://www.blueshighway.org/>). The Center personnel work with college classes from throughout the United States with a focus on civil rights history, the Mississippi River, the Blues, service learning, the Emmett Till murder, and the Great Migration. The Center also provides tours and assistance in tour planning to groups visiting the region. Some recent groups include the Oxford Conference for the Book, the Culinary Institute of America, the Southern Foodways Alliance, the Blues Today Symposium of Living Blues Magazine, and the Alluvian Hotel. The Center also recently facilitated the efforts of the Voice of America TV, Japanese television and radio writers and crews, and National Public Radio. In the past year, the Center welcomed more than 800 visitors to the Delta, and assisted with media events that have reached an audience estimated at over 10 million people.

The Delta Center also is the home of The Blues Highway Association, a volunteer group composed of State and local tourism representatives, museum directors, the Chambers of Commerce. Working with the national Park Service these groups are attempting to enhance the recognition of and promote the cultural heritage of the region.

From The University of Mississippi by Gary Long

During the past year, the Sociology and Anthropology Department at the University of Mississippi has added four new assistant professors. Ross Haenfler received his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado and specializes in political sociology, youth subcultures, and social movements. Dr. Haenfler did his dissertation on the Straight Edge Movement. Minjoo Oh received her Ph.D. from SUNY, Buffalo and specializes in the sociology of culture with an emphasis on food, identity, and consumption. Dr. Oh also does theory. Gabriel Wrobel received his Ph.D. from Indiana University and specializes in physical anthropology and meso-America. Dr. Wrobel's dissertation focused the dentition of archeological populations. Next fall, sociologist Kirk Johnson, who received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois and studies the role of African-American journalists in the mass media, as well as ethnomedicine, will join our faculty, in a joint appointment with African American Studies. Dr. Johnson worked on the award-winning series "Eyes on the Prize." We are pleased to welcome four outstanding new members to our department, which now stands at nine full-time sociologists and five full-time anthropologists.

In the last two years, we have revised both the anthropology and sociology undergraduate programs quite extensively. As a consequence, both curricula better represent the core areas of sociology and anthropology, and are now more consistent with programs at comparable universities. We also have added a second summer archaeological field school and now can offer students field experience either here in Mississippi or in Belize.

The graduate curriculum in sociology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Mississippi is currently under revision. Two new substantive courses have been added to the curriculum, to be taught by Dr. Oh (Sociology of Culture) and Dr. Haenfler (Teaching). Also, the sociology curriculum will feature several other new elements: a course on teaching that will incorporate supervised, hands-on experience, a new survey of research methods course to be team-taught by the entire faculty, and a new two-semester proseminar on professional development to help students master the skills and knowledge for success in the graduate program and in the profession of sociology. And, students will be able to choose an optional teaching internship, with teaching opportunities in local community colleges and on the University of Mississippi campus. This option is designed to prepare students for a career in community college teaching. The new graduate curriculum will include both a thesis and a non-thesis option.

Students who choose the latter will culminate their courses of study with presentations of their research to faculty and students of the department. Students who write theses will participate in a new research presentation proseminar in their last year of graduate work. Both thesis and non-thesis graduate students will benefit from a graduate student handbook to help them negotiate their ways through the two programs. This revised, expanded, graduate curriculum, strong in the areas of the sociology of culture; community development, planning, and international development; and in the sociology of inequalities--race, class, and gender--will be in place beginning the Fall of 2006.

Dr. David Swanson, editor of *Population Research and Policy Review*, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Southern Demographic Association, is in his second year as chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and is busy with his administrative duties and his research agenda in demography.

From the University of North Alabama by Thomas Kersen

Dr. Jerri H. Bullard has produced and directs a program that allows students to earn Certificate in Gerontology after completing 24 credit hours. The courses are available through the internet or on DVD. Each course provides specific expertise in the field of gerontology. This certificate has been designed for health care professionals who desire additional education and training in the field of gerontology to care for clients, professionals who are already in the field whether in a home health, hospice, assisted living or nursing home setting who seek additional credentials, individuals considering a career in gerontology, or regular university students who desire a special focus in gerontology. To receive additional information about the program contact Jerri Bullard at jbullard@una.edu or Karen Christian, Program Coordinator at 256.765.4289 or 800.825.5862, ext. 4289 or klchristian@una.edu.

Dr. Kersen was interviewed by a local paper about the transition back to civilian life of combat veterans. He also hosted a public event in which a Holocaust survivor discussed his experiences. A paper in which Kersen was a coauthor entitled "Naturalization of U.S. Immigrants before Reforms in the 1990s" presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the Population Association of America in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Kersen is currently researching factors that explain intentional community survivorship. He is also updating a paper about differences in military earnings. Finally, he was given access to Federal Trade Commission data that will allow him to study factors that explain rates of identity theft at the county level.

Dr. Craig T. Robertson, the chair of the Department, was recently awarded funds from the UNA College of Arts and Science Research and Faculty Development Committee to initiate research examining the case outcomes of felony offenders sentenced in the criminal courts of selected Alabama counties. Dr. Robertson will begin his data collection this summer and hopes to make a presentation of his preliminary research findings at the 2006 AMSA meeting at the University of Mississippi.

Dr. Alex Takeuchi has presented a paper entitled "Reduction of Inequality in Dyads: The Role of Environmental Reinforcement" (co-authored with May Takeuchi and Louis Gray at Washington State University) at 2005 Pacific Sociological Association annual meeting in Portland, Oregon on April 8th. The paper is a result of an ongoing research project by Dr. Takeuchi and his colleagues to find ways to reduce unequal structure and status differences in small groups. Part of the research was founded by Elder Peace Action Research Endowment, College of Liberal Arts, Washington State University.

Important Announcement

After long and faithful service to the University of Alabama and the discipline of sociology, Selwyn Hollingsworth recently retired and wishes to donate his collection of journals to any college/university library in Alabama or Mississippi. His almost complete collection includes *Social Forces* (1936-1998), *Rural Sociology* (1938-2001), and the *American Sociological Review* (1936-1997). In addition, the collection also includes selected years of *Demography*, *American Sociologist*, *American Political Science Review*, *The Rural Sociologist*, *Social Science*, *Southern Rural Sociology*, *Sociological Spectrum*, and *Sociological Inquiry*. Don Bogie is serving as caretaker of Selwyn's journals and you may contact him at 334-244-3388 or dbogie@mail.aum.edu for additional information. Ideally, Don says that he would like to place all of the journals with a single institution willing to make arrangements for delivery.

Call for a "Procedures Manual"

I am seeking the consideration of present and recent past officers and Committee Chairs to assist me in creating what I refer to as a "A-MSA Procedures Manual". During the summer of 2004 I proposed to the A-MSA Executive Committee that the association should have a "Procedures manual", a manual in which the duties of office are, in a general way, outlined. The rationale for this proposal is that the association will have, despite a changing of the guard, a vital continuity of the functions of office from year to year. To date two individuals have responded to my call for a general outline of the duties of each committee and each Council office. I again would appeal to the former and present officers and committee chairs to offer their insights so that a suggested "Procedures Manual" can be created. Please send your detailed outline of office to me so that I may coordinate this initiative.

To Faculty and Administration of the A-MSA, by Stephen F. Black

Impact: An Alabama Student Service Initiative, working with over 202 trained FocusFirst volunteers representing ten institutions of higher education, have screened over 2100 children for eye diseases and disorders and plan to screen 2000 more before the end of the spring semester. Our SpeakFirst high school debaters have competed in ten local and regional tournaments and have participated in five college visits. SaveFirst financial literacy seminars are planned for several weekends in May.

Impact is currently recruiting staff for next year. We are looking for students taking a year or two off between their undergraduate and graduate education who are interested in giving a year of service to the state of Alabama. Because staff turnover is annual, we are always looking for talented, driven individuals who are willing to work hard to make Impact a success. Although three of our staff positions have already been filled for next year, one staff position and one Americorps/VISTA position are still available for the 2005-2006 year.

We are asking professors, administrators and educators to send us the names and contact information of talented, focused, and driven seniors who may want to take a year off and serve the state of Alabama. Positions that are available are:

1). Projects Manager (paid position); Start Date: July or August 2005. The Projects Manager coordinates all activities related to the execution of Impact projects, working under the supervision of the President/Founder of Impact. Working closely with administrations of higher education institutions, community leaders, and student volunteers, this individual directs the implementation of Impact's three signature initiatives: FocusFirst, SaveFirst, and SpeakFirst. In addition, the Projects Manager will have the following responsibilities: 1) Assisting Impact program directors with specific needs for the initiatives; 2) Assisting in preparation of grant proposals, managing grants, and preparing annual reports related to grants; 3) Assisting in training student volunteers.

2). Americorps/VISTA Position: SaveFirst; (Living stipend of \$780/month); Start Date: July or August 2005

To apply, we require a cover letter, a resume, and three references submitted (preferably in electronic form) to Stephen Black, President and Founder of Impact: sblack@mcglaw.com. You can fax the information to 205.934.3522 or mail a hard copy to the following address: Impact: An Alabama Student Service Initiative; c/o Stephen Black; 1901 6th Avenue North; Suite 2400; Birmingham, AL 35203

Editor's Note: Mrs. Stephen F. Black offered an inspiring Address at the A-MSA annual banquet held at Smith Hall on the campus of The University of Alabama campus. In addition to identifying worthy students for the jobs available through IMPACT, some readers may wish to contact Mr. Black to comment on his presentation.

Reflections: A Message from the Heart by Josique Radegonde, Brandeis University and Delta State University

I arrived without any preconceived ideas about the Mississippi Delta and I did not really know what to expect of this Delta project project. But now I recognize that this experience has had a great impact on me. After spending nine months in the Delta, I visited Jackson, Mississippi where I was introduced to a group of Congressmen from Nigeria. I was to accompany them on a tour in the Delta led by Pamela Moore. This experience was very special to me. In two days, I was exposed to the Delta's history, tradition, culture, norm, environment and how all these components frame the lens of the leaders who are working to develop the region. I was fascinated by the passion and strength of the leaders in their endeavor to make a difference in the Delta regardless of challenges and obstacles hindering their progress. This was my first taste of the South, and I felt that it was a great privilege for me to experience the Delta, to learn by observing and to gain some appreciation of the dynamics of the region.

Coming back from this tour I was picked up by Dr. Green, the director of the Institute for Community-Based Research where I would spend the next nine months. Two days after he introduced me to his colleagues I was on a research trip to Arkansas. This was another special occasion where I got to observe what was going on in the region of Arkansas. I would say I could not understand what was going on in me by this time. I felt so much pain in learning about the history and life of these black farmers, some of them could compete in the economy and some not. As small farmers they are not very well equipped and also of low education, but they are hardworking and very nice people. Once again I experienced a taste of the South.

Coming back to Delta State University in Cleveland, I started my project without being sure of where I was going. Of course I started to experience the culture shock of coming from the North to the South. The shock was not in the beautiful landscape that I have to face every morning or on every expedition, but in the change of food – pizza, fried fish, fried chicken, fried okra, pasta, sweet desert, cookies and ice cream and of multiple churches and beliefs. Up here, in the highly controlling and bureaucratic system there is no public transportation, a networking and categorizing system, no access to quality health care, poor eating habits, a quantity of illnesses such as obesity, diabetes, cancer, hypertension and ulcer that exist around me, a fatalistic acceptance of their situation, and the segregation that still exists. All these are not only unfamiliar to me, but not acceptable either. I, therefore, started to gain a "Big Picture," of the Delta.

Being an activist in my country of Mauritius and in Rodrigues, a neighboring island, and coming from a year of academic training at Brandeis University, it was hard for me to compromise to all the principles in the Delta. It is not in my character to compromise. It was a challenge for me to learn how to relate to others in a small town where not only does everyone know each other, but also whatever sounds unfamiliar seems to frighten them; they would not trust an outsider and one would hear a great deal of gossip and, of course, one's reaction will be seen as crazy within the context of their small world. This has been a very special experience for me where I learned to keep inside of myself the things that really revolt me. I have also learned to appreciate the way people talk about their community, how they interpret their community, and how they make sense of their world. I became fascinated by everything I could hear, discover and learn.

The Delta is not only the world of mystery which fascinates historians, writers and researchers, it is a world where people are surviving in a system within which they are still politically marginalized, socially excluded and discriminated against. These factors have an obvious bearing on race relationship in the Delta. Whites, who have a legacy of land ownership or have a good education, are better off than the blacks. Also, the global economy that has developed throughout the world has a negative impact on economic policies and, in some fashion, seem to assist in maintaining the socio economic disparities; the result is, as in the past, poor health, continued race discrimination, and persistent poverty.

Working with the Institute and interacting with members of different organizations, students and other people, while maintaining a good relationship with Pamela Moore and Dr. Mack, have helped me to enter into the complexities of life in the Delta. I have also had the opportunity to participate as a guest speaker in the World Women Conference at OurHouse in Greenville and to give a presentation on the Globalization Conference Day at the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association held in Tuscaloosa at the University of Alabama. These have been very special opportunities for me to further my understanding of the developmental process from evolving traditional to modern, research and action, from top to grassroots, from local to national to global, from theoretical perspective to practice, from individual to community, from my own experience of being sick and not licensed to drive, and from the interactions with as many people as possible within the Mississippi Delta. As a consequence I am able to link the problem of health in the Delta to national and international notions of health in order to come up with an approach I believe can assist the institute to promote an enhanced quality of health in the Delta.

During my intense work experience with the Institute for Community-Based Research I also had moments of personal hurt on several occasions as a matter of being an outsider coming from the North and from Mauritius, each of which are unknown to the Delta. It was difficult for me to gain the trust of some of the people with whom I had to relate. I was also very conscious of the challenge of being a Brandeis student coming into the Delta to work with Delta State students. All I could do was to maintain a focus and keep smiling. I could not stop people from speculating about my presence, but I could respond with a smile and sometimes, with a firm reaction. I learned that the Delta is no exception to any other development context; it is hard to enter a different setting and to gain the trust of the people. But people in the Delta are as friendly and hospitable as in the North or in any other of the many places I visited. I have really appreciated the Deltan hospitality and politeness. The people are kind, generous, helpful and dynamic. I have gained a great experience from living in the Delta, from the churches I visited, the campus, the cafeteria, and have made many friends throughout Mississippi. In participating in the World Women Conference, I gained a wider perspective of gender relations and discrimination towards women around different parts of the world. Through participation in the panel presentation in the Globalization Conference Day at the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association held in Tuscaloosa at the University of Alabama I gained a better understanding of the development process in the Mississippi Delta. My experience in the Delta has given me a special and unique opportunity to observe the Delta, its natural resources, its people, its struggle, its challenge and its progress. I would say that all prejudices that lie in race, socioeconomic status, and health related issues are linked with the U. S. political and economic policies.

I express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Mack, Pamela Moore, OurHouse, Robert Bell, Mitch Morris, Sister Dona Mary, Debora Moore, Professor Nylander, Dr. Green and Professor Peck.

Editor's Note: We appreciate you Josique. It takes a great deal of courage to embark on this kind of adventure. If only more young people were so concerned; perhaps the world could be a better place.

A Final Comment from the Immediate Past President

Although a number of individuals were recognized and honored at the February 24 banquet, it is also important that the contributions over an extended period of time be recognized once more. Elsewhere in this Newsletter the new officers of the A-MSA have been recognized, but I think I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to once again acknowledge the contributions of the out-going officers of the Executive Council. We could identify these individuals as the “unsung Heroes and Heroines” who work in the background with little recognition for they are truly the backbone of any viable organization. I have in mind the long-time Secretary Stacy Ruth of Jones County Junior College and Treasurer and Communications Director Craig Robertson of the University of North Alabama. In addition to the important role these individuals have at the annual meeting, each serves as a reservoir of knowledge critical to the on-going work of the association and they possess the information essential to other members of the Executive Council who are called upon throughout the course of the year to perform important functions. In addition we have out-going members-at-large from the states of Mississippi, Brent Hales of Delta State University, and Alabama, Charles E. Faupel of Auburn University. For a period of three years these individuals have responded when called upon to meet the needs of the A-MSA. To each of these individuals I extend a profound note of gratitude for your service to the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association. We could not do our work without your willingness to take that extra step in support of your colleagues and students.

The planning for an annual conference such as was held in Tuscaloosa begins many months prior to the event. And it seems that no matter how much effort occurs well in advance of the meeting the critical last minute details including pickup and delivery, telephone calls, arranging, transportation, public announcements, and what seems like a constant array of tasks were performed by members of the Local Arrangements Committee. I thank Darren Surman, who served in a dual capacity as Chairperson of the Program Development Committee, Stacy Surman, Paul Mills, and Jolene Mills for their commitment of time and energy, dedication to the project, and their uncompromising effort without which the smooth flow of the entire event would not have been possible. Each of you have my sincere appreciation and gratitude.

To my University of Alabama colleagues who responded last summer to my overture to participate in the annual program by committing to organize sessions I want to indicate that your support was to prove invaluable as I began the process of program development. And to my former students, Bonnie Butcher, Kimberly Colburn, Justin Dearborn, Patrick Drake, and Robyn Lessinger who responded to my call for their assistance and who began what became a wonderful student response to my call for their program participation, I extend my sincere appreciation for your warm receptiveness and dedication to ensure the success of the program.

A long-standing and critical component of the annual program is the active participation of graduate and undergraduate students. The 2005 program was to benefit from the contributions of a large number of students and this wonderful response to the “Call for Participation” also was to serve as a challenge to those individuals who agreed to serve on the Student “Paper Awards Committee”. The good humor and timely response of each of these individuals, Ronald Jones, Don Bogie, Louie Woolbright, Ming Tsui and especially David LoConto and Robert Jenkot, who were invaluable in establishing the parameters for the work of this committee, I express a sincere thank you. Your efforts in support of this important component of the annual made my task very easy.

Finally, Dean Carmen Taylor of the College of Arts and Sciences did not hesitate in providing support for this entire event. Indeed, Dr. Taylor not only committed funds from her limited budget, she made recommendations that were to be critical to the success of the 2005 program. Her strong support and encouragement throughout the 2004-2005 period provided the extra incentive needed to ensure the commitment of University resources were spent on sponsoring a worthy event. And because of the strong positive response received from staff members in various units of the University of Alabama and from the Tuscaloosa community we actually came in under budget. Every faculty member should have such a positive, supportive Dean. My profound thank you is extended to Dean Carmen Taylor for her understanding, wonderful commitment to support our association, and her support of my effort.

Dennis L. Peck
The University of Alabama

Call for Nominations from the Committee for Awards by Dennis L. Peck

One of the more pleasurable tasks that I will engage in during the coming year is chairing the Committee for Awards. This committee is composed of five past Presidents of the A-MSA, the members of whom for the 2005-2006 year are: Dennis L. Peck, Chair; Duane Gill; John Dunkelberger; Albert B. Nylander, 111; and Larry Hall. We invite nominations for one or both of the following awards: 1) Distinguished Service Award; 2) Outstanding Achievement Award. The following information is taken from the A-MSA Constitution and shall serve as the guide for both A-MSA membership and the Committee for Awards members.

Article VIII - Recognition and Awards

Section 1. The Association may present two awards to members: the Distinguished Service Award and the Outstanding Achievement Award. These awards are not necessarily presented every year, but may be presented when the membership has identified deserving recipients.

Distinguished Service Award — This recognition is given to a member of long standing who has promoted and supported the AMSA with his/her time and talents. Eligibility for this award is defined as:

1. Ten years or more of AMSA membership, and
2. a strong record of involvement in Association governance and annual programs.

Outstanding Achievement Award — During the course of a member's professional career, there are particularly noteworthy accomplishments which bring special recognition to the sociology profession and to the AMSA. Eligibility for this award requires only that the individual has been a member of the AMSA for a minimum of six years (not continuously).

Section 2. Selection of Award Recipients. - The Awards Committee shall consist of the last five past Presidents. The immediate Past President shall serve as Chair. The Chair of the committee shall send out requests for nominations from the membership. Nominations may come from the committee as well. It is the responsibility of the Committee to present any nominations for the awards to the Executive Committee.

Although these awards are considered to be quite special, if you believe an individual is deserving of consideration by the Committee please submit your nomination directly to me at: e-mail address (dpeck@TenHoor,.as.ua.edu or dpeck@Bama.ua.edu) or to The University of Alabama; Box 870314; Tuscaloosa, Alabama; 35487-0314. When submitting your nomination please describe why you believe the nominee is deserving of either the A-MSA Distinguished Service or the Outstanding Achievement Award.



ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION AWARD NOMINATION FORM

1. Distinguished Service Award

This recognition is awarded to a member of long standing who has promoted and supported the A-MSA with his/her time and talents.

Eligibility for this award is defined as:

- a. Ten (10) years or more of A-MSA membership, and
- b. a strong record of involvement in Association governance and annual programs

2. Outstanding Achievement Award

During the course of a member's professional career there are particularly noteworthy accomplishments which bring special recognition to the sociology profession and to the A-MSA. Eligibility for this award requires only that the individual has been a member of the A-MSA for a minimum of six (6) years (not continuously).

There are many people deserving of these awards, therefore we encourage you to nominate a colleague who you think is worthy of one of these honors. Please list the candidate's name as well as your name and address so we can contact you. Letters of recommendation and information concerning the candidates will be helpful to the Awards Committee.

Thank you for your nomination.

Type of Award (please check):

Distinguished Service Award **Outstanding Achievement Award**

Nominee's Name: _____

Nominator: _____

Your Address: _____

Phone Number:/ e-mail address _____

Please send to:

Dr. Dennis L. Peck, Ph.D.
Chair, Committee for Awards
Sociology
The University of Alabama
Box 870314
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0314
205/348-1944 (work)
e-mail: dpeck@tenHoor.as.ua.edu

Deadline for submission of nominations is January 11, 2006.