

For Immediate Release

West Virginia Statistical Analysis Center Director receives prestigious G. Paul Sylvestre award

The Division of Criminal Justice Services, Statistical Analysis Center Director Dr. Stephen Haas was honored as the 2008 recipient of the prestigious *G. Paul Sylvestre Award*; the highest honor bestowed upon SAC directors for demonstrating outstanding achievement over an extended period of time as recognized by the US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The honor was presented at the BJS-sponsored Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) annual conference.



Dr. Jeffery Sedgwick, former Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics and current Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs presented the 27th G. Paul Sylvestre Award on behalf of the BJS. Dr. Sedgwick said, "Under his leadership, the West Virginia SAC has produced an impressive number of high-quality reports in the areas of criminal justice, including *Establishing the "Statistical Accuracy" of Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) in West Virginia*, which was awarded JRSA's Hoke National Publication Award for Excellence in 2006. The WV SAC was also the recipient of the *2008 Technical Innovation Recognition Award* given by Justice Research and Statistical Association for a project titled *Development and Implementation of WV's Community-Based Offender Management and Research Information System*. This project resulted in the development of a web-based data collection system designed to assist in the administration and monitoring of community corrections programs in the state of West Virginia.

During Haas' tenure, the West Virginia SAC has worked on several projects providing important guidance for researchers relating to prisoner population projections, accuracy in crime reporting, criminal history records improvement, and the deterrent capacity of Project Safe Neighborhoods media awareness campaigns in West Virginia. Other work has involved examination of race disparities in law enforcement traffic stops and the involvement of weapons in violent crime. *Gun Availability and Crime in West Virginia: An Examination of NIBRS Data*, featured in a special issue of *Justice Research and Policy*, is a recent example of Dr. Haas' exceptional work.

Sedgwick also remarked "It is fitting for this conference focusing on how to use data to improve justice policy and practice, BJS recognizes the West Virginia SAC for demonstrating how to successfully meet this critical challenge, and in particular, we congratulate Stephen Haas for his exemplary leadership of these efforts."

In addition to serving as Director of the SAC, Dr. Haas serves as Principal Investigator and Project Director on several state and federally funded research projects and evaluations. He has served as a Delegate member for JRSA's Executive Committee since being elected in October 2007. He also chairs the JRSA Research Committee. Dr. Haas holds a B.A. in psychology and political science from The Ohio State

University, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati. He has directed the West Virginia Statistical Analysis Center since August 2003.

Statistical Analysis Centers are the state agencies responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating justice data. The association works closely with the Bureau of Justice Statistics and other federal agencies to promote the effective use of criminal and juvenile justice information.

Information about the West Virginia SAC and its publications can be viewed online at <http://www.wvdcjs.com/statsanalysis/index.html>.

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