



# Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research

Winter 2016

Visit our website for the latest news!

<http://www.mapor.org/>

Keep an eye out for the post-conference survey in January!

Congratulations to the winner of the Doris A. Graber Award for Best Public Opinion Paper, Ozan Kuru, from the University of Michigan for his paper entitled 'De-Monopolization of Polls: What Do Ordinary Citizens Make of Different Quantifications?'

**Congratulations to our MAPOR Fellows: Julie Andsager & Joe Murphy**

**Read about the tribute to Allan McCutcheon on Page 3.**

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## A Message from the President

*Matt Courser, MAPOR President, PIRE*

As MAPOR begins its 42<sup>nd</sup> year, I'm amazed at how much we accomplished during an incredibly busy 41<sup>st</sup> year! We just completed our Annual Conference, which featured a Keynote Address from Scott Keeter of the Pew Research Center, a short course from Scott Crawford, and a Pedagogy Hour led by Sherry Emery of NORC. We also welcomed two new MAPOR Fellows, Joe Murphy of RTI and Julie Andsager of the University of Tennessee—Knoxville. If that wasn't enough, MAPOR sponsored two successful webinars and during the summer held our first informal Mixer.



MAPOR also made significant progress from an organizational standpoint. We achieved financial stability through record support from our sponsors, the conference short course, and conference attendance. We also negotiated and signed a three year contract with the Embassy Suites, providing the organization with a conference home through 2019 at a cost that is sustainable. Together with this, we were able to renew the license for our organizational management software (Cvent) at our current, deeply-discounted rates.

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## MAPOR 2016: Conference in Review

*Eulàlia Abril, 2016 MAPOR Conference Chair, UIC*

*Ipek Bilgen, 2017 MAPOR Conference Chair, NORC at the University of Chicago*



We held a fun and exciting conference in November! MAPOR 2016 was well attended. We continued on some traditional events like the Keynote address, Pedagogy Hour, Short Course, President's reception, and book raffle, reprogrammed other happenings such as the Networking Luncheon to make it more interesting, and introduced a few new features: a coding hour with R, a Briefs session, a casual get together with students-only, and sponsor tables to better connect our generous sponsors and MAPORites. These new events were well-received, and hope you think we should repeat them.

*Continued on Page 2*

### ***President's Column, con't***

All of these activities supported MAPOR's mission of bringing public opinion researchers together to learn and to share our work. What makes MAPOR unique is that we focus on public opinion research in a broad sense, provide a home for qualitative and quantitative research, and work to bring both communication researchers and survey researchers together.

We have been working hard over the last two years to support our mission and expand the impact of the work that MAPOR members do. Our work this past year to reach out to a wider array of academic departments and scholars serves as a key example of efforts in this area.

As we enter our 42<sup>nd</sup> year, we will expand our work to support MAPOR's mission. We will continue reaching out to organizations, departments, and scholars who may not be aware of MAPOR (or who may not have been a part of MAPOR for awhile). We will pilot a program to provide student sponsorships to our 2017 conference and will work to develop student-focused sessions at the 2017 Conference. However, MAPOR needs your help as we move forward. I ask MAPOR members to reflect on the questions below and to send us any feedback or ideas that can help us improve.

1. What individuals, organizations, and academic departments should MAPOR reach out to and work to engage?
2. What key topics related to public opinion have we missed in our webinars, conferences, and networking events?
3. What else can MAPOR do to support your work and research on public opinion?

In addition, our annual Member Survey is coming in January and this will provide additional opportunities for feedback. Please consider completing the survey even if you were not able to attend this year's conference.

Finally, it is my honor to serve as the organization's President for 2016-17 and to be supported by an amazing, talented, and dedicated Council. It really seems like just yesterday that I was giving my first MAPOR presentation! With your help, we will build on our momentum and keep moving MAPOR forward. Please reach out at any time with thoughts, concerns, questions, and ideas.

To quote Trent Buskirk, our Past President: "Go MAPOR Go!"

### ***Conference Chair Column, con't***

MAPOR's 41st edition was a success in many ways, but we also faced some challenges: Issues in booking rooms for our members via the hotel site and the hotel's personnel turnout within the managing team. Still, we are happy with the Embassy Suites and hope to discuss and resolve these issues for 2017. MAPOR brought 201 attendees representing more than 43 institutions and 70 students (over a third of our attendees). The conference also featured excellent speakers—including international speakers—two panels, and a respondent-interview workgroup for the second time.

This year also marked a record sponsorship—over \$20,000!—which will enable us to continue growing and expanding as our membership sees fit. Our second year at the Embassy Suites gave us room to improve on some of the spatial issues that did not work last year, as well as to reassure us that this may well be our new home for years to come.

Within the next few weeks, we will meet with hotel staff to debrief on our collective experience and to identify specific improvements needed for MAPOR 2017. One way members like you can help us is by completing the Annual MAPOR Member Survey, which will be sent to our membership in the next few weeks. We are committed to meeting your needs for our 2017 conference but need to hear from you. What worked well? What can we improve? Lastly, stay tuned for presentations and abstracts from the 2016 conference—they will be posted on our website in the coming weeks. On behalf of your 2016 Conference Chair (Lali Abril) and your 2017 Conference Chair (Ipek Bilgen), thank you for the opportunity to serve MAPOR and to continue the traditions that make us all MAPORites.

## Tribute to Allan McCutcheon

The 2016 MAPOR Conference offered a tribute to Allan McCutcheon. Allan was a great friend of MAPOR. Paul Lavrakas and Rene Bautista shared remarks and generously offered to include those remarks in this newsletter.

### Memorial to Allan McCutcheon at the 2016 MAPOR Conference By Paul

J. Lavrakas

It is with considerable sadness that I recall the last time I was with Allan McCutcheon. The sadness being due to the fact that unbeknownst to me it would be the last time.



It was in May 2015 at the University of Nebraska Lincoln when my Australian colleague, Darren Pennay, and I met with Allan and some of his colleagues for dinner at Lincoln's finest restaurant. Earlier in the day Darren and I had spent several hours with Allan to learn of his experiences with, and to gain his sage advice about, establishing and leading the graduate program in survey research at UNL and directing UNL's Gallup Research Center. One of the major reasons that Darren had travelled from Melbourne Australia to Lincoln was to be able to meet with Allan for the benefit of the university center and graduate program that Darren was helping to establish at Australian National University.

That day with Allan in May 2015 encapsulated many of the reasons that Allan was so respected and revered. Allan had world-renowned knowledge of survey statistics and survey methods, having contributed myriad scholarly works on these topics. He loved his students and gave so much to them as their mentor; and he in turn was beloved by them. Allan was very savvy in the business of establishing and protecting the interests of the university programs that he headed, and knew well the challenges of negotiating the rough and often ugly waters of university politics. And Allan was a "man of the world" with a presence in many international scholarly ventures.

Allan had a quiet sophistication about him. He was humble in ways that often masked his erudite knowledge of many subject areas, including many that had nothing to do with empirical research. This included an appreciation for the so-called "finer things in life," and in saying this I recall how pleased the chef-owner of the gourmet restaurant was that evening to see Allan again.

Allan L. McCutcheon received his undergraduate education from Iowa State U., and earned his master's degree and PhD at the U. of Chicago. His three degrees were in Sociology and his thesis and dissertation were not on statistical topics. For nearly a decade after finishing his doctorate Allan worked in Chicago, mostly at the University of Chicago. He then accepted a faculty position at the U. of Delaware in Sociology where he stayed until 1996. In 1996 he accepted the very prestigious Donald O. Clifton Chair of Survey Science at the U. of Nebraska Lincoln. And he became the founding chair of the university's graduate programs in Survey Research and Methods. Throughout his career, Allan, taught and did research outside the U.S. on many occasions, including in Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

Allan was honored by being elected as a Fellow by several professional societies, including the Royal Statistical Society, the American Statistical Association, and our own Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research.

Allan was also elected to serve in several executive capacities for AAPOR, WAPOR, and MAPOR. He was MAPOR's President in 2003-2004, and it was Allan's idea that MAPOR establish a Student Award for excellence in methodological and statistical research. All of these professional organizations were strengthened by Allan's volunteer service to them.

In closing I want to note for our younger attendees that Allan was a model professional and model human being who found a way to balance a great many things in life. And he was able to do this so that the quality of how he lived was uniformly excellent across all that he did. For those of us who are older, let us take heed that life is often much shorter than it should be and that Allan made a point to enjoy his life as he was living it. But I also must note that Allan so very much deserved to have many more years ahead of him -- for his own enjoyment... that of his family... and for ours in continuing to have Allan enrich our lives.

### **Tribute to Allan McCutcheon By René Bautista**

- Thank you Rick and Paul for organizing this remembrance in honor of Allan McCutcheon. Your words about Allan are a testament of his many accomplishments and contributions to our field.
- Good afternoon. I'm Rene Bautista. I'm a Sr. Methodologist at NORC at the University of Chicago. I was the last doctoral student that Allan McCutcheon hooded from the Survey Research and Methodology program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- I have had the privilege to call Allan a mentor over the past 10 years. Today, it's been 200 days since he passed away. I miss him every day.
- As with many other students, I enrolled in a doctoral program, and specifically in the SRAM program, because Allan was a great inspiration to me. The great number of messages and kind words posted immediately after his passing, by his students on Facebook, show what he meant to many of us.
- His academic and professional career is indeed impressive. And it is equally impressive to know how dedicated he was to his students; how deeply involved he was with their careers. While he always encouraged independence, he gently guided the footsteps of many methodologists. They now serve in different roles at major institutions as successful professionals. That's his legacy.
- I'd like to share a personal memory about him. I was in my first year of graduate school. I was adapting to a new country --this country. I was learning a new language, adjusting to new academic standards, and I was a new parent. I got a "C" in a math class --a calculus class. I sent him an email, and he asked me to meet him the next day. I was terrified that he would be upset; that I'd lose funding. But instead of meeting an angry-looking professor, he took me out for lunch. He even brought a gift for me. He gave me a book titled "A Tour of The Calculus" by David Berlinski. Allan told me that grad school was about not giving up; it was about perseverance and discipline. It was about passion; it was about life. That same year, I was able to publish my first peer-reviewed article on a well-regarded journal. He instilled confidence in me. That's how he taught.
- In addition to his impressive professional career, Allan was a good friend to so many. We shared many passions over the years, including exit polling. He invited me to come as Election Night analyst to Edison Media Research to join a team of experts led by himself and Joe Lenski. I invited him to come to Mexico to do exit polling as well, and join a team of experts led by Francisco Abundis (here in the audience). I never stopped learning from Allan.

- He and I shared a passion for social research. He and I grew close over the years. We became friends. We spent hours discussing the complexities of polling and the future of the industry. We met every time he was in town for the MAPOR conference. We'd discuss art, music, books, and his favorite topic: food. I miss him every day. His teachings will live through his students.  
Thank you for remembering him.

### **MAPORtrait: Colleen McClain, Student Liaison**

Colleen McClain is a second-year PhD student in the Program in Survey Methodology at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, and the student liaison on the MAPOR Council. Her background crosses public opinion and survey methodology; she was first bitten by the research bug as an undergraduate, working with MAPOR greats in political communication while studying at the University of Michigan. After graduation she accepted an internship with the Survey Research Center and was placed in the Survey Methodology Program, her first exposure to the field—and one that shaped the early years of her career before returning to receive her MS and continue to the PhD.



Colleen's research interests include the use of web and mobile technology in data collection; the intricacies of measuring public opinion, especially over time; and the cognitive and social mechanisms that underlie survey response. She has been fortunate to work with MPSM faculty members (also MAPOR greats!)  
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data collection; the intricacies of measuring public opinion, especially over time; and the cognitive and social mechanisms that underlie survey response. She has been fortunate to work with MPSM faculty members (also MAPOR greats!) who have challenged her to think in rigorous and innovative ways, particularly as the field evolves in what is an exciting time to be a survey methodologist. Her research is grounded in practice, drawing from experience on studies fielded at Michigan; at SoundRocket, where she helped spearhead early mobile web studies in collaboration with clients; and at NORC at the University of Chicago, where she interned as a Master's student and subsequently worked on large-scale methodological projects embedded in telephone and web surveys.

MAPOR and AAPOR have been central to her career development. She first presented at AAPOR 2009 as a Burns "Bud" Roper Fellow, and has presented at AAPOR, MAPOR, or both in every year since. Along the way, she has met colleagues and friends who have turned into a professional community. She was grateful to receive the MAPOR Student Paper Award in 2015 and especially for valuable feedback from MAPOR fellows that helped her push her research forward.

She is looking forward to serving a second year as the student liaison, and encourages all students to become active members and attend the conference—its welcoming community for students and veterans alike drew her to the organization and, in large part, to the field. She is excited to continue helping bring students from diverse fields across the Midwest (and beyond) together to learn and collaborate! Have ideas about student engagement or want to chat about research? Contact her at [camcclai@umich.edu](mailto:camcclai@umich.edu).



## Photos from MAPOR's 2016 Conference

**Pictured (Clockwise):** Joe Murphy, MAPOR Fellow; Scott Keeter, Keynote Speaker, Julie Andsager, MAPOR Fellow; MAPOR Council



# A WORD FROM THE MAPOR CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP COORDINATOR

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Support from organizations like yours help keep costs down for young researchers, and helps keep MAPOR conference attendance high. In return, your sponsorship increases the visibility of your organization, both to future customers and to future hires of survey professionals.

Please consider supporting MAPOR. We offer the following levels of support:

### **MAPOR Bronze Sponsor**

- For contributions under \$1,000
- Half page ad in the conference program
- Link on the MAPOR Website (see <http://www.mapor.org/sponsorship.html>)
- Mention in the quarterly newsletters

### **MAPOR Silver Sponsor**

- For contributions between \$1,000-\$2,000
- MAPOR lunch and conference registration for 1 participant
- Full page ad in the conference program
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- Link on the MAPOR Website (see <http://www.mapor.org/sponsorship.html>)
- Mention in the quarterly newsletters

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- For contributions above \$2,000
- MAPOR lunch and conference registration for 2 or more participants (depending upon amount)
- Full page ad in the conference program
- Large placard featuring your organization displayed at a major conference event (e.g. meal, break, pedagogy hour)
- Link on the MAPOR Website (see <http://www.mapor.org/sponsorship.html>)
- Mention in the quarterly newsletters

For more information or to become a sponsor, call or email John Stevenson at [stevenson@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:stevenson@ssc.wisc.edu) (608-262-9032) or Ronald Langley at [langley@uky.edu](mailto:langley@uky.edu) (859-257-4685) for more information.

Thank you for your help!

Ron Langley  
MAPOR Corporate Sponsorship Coordinator



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