

My name is Melissa Stefanini and I worked as a Research Associate for the Center for Business and Economic Research for five years prior to obtaining my Masters in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UT). I now serve as the SDC Lead at UT. For a bit of personal information, I grew up near the mountains in Tennessee and enjoy spending time outside with my husband and two dogs.

Answers to the nomination questions:

1) What do you think the primary role of the Steering Committee is or should be?

The Steering Committee should be the voice of the states to the Census Bureau. They should be the liaisons/resources of information to the states as well as to the Census Bureau.

2) What would your primary goal(s) be as a member?

My primary goals would be to provide guidance to the SDC network and collect and contribute meaningful insight to the Census Bureau.

3) What is your vision for the SDC network for 2017 and beyond?

In my eyes, the future of the SDC network will provide encouragement and cooperation to the states and the Census Bureau. The network will be a true resource for the SDC leads.

4) What do you think the SDC network can do to add value to Census data?

The SDC network can bring local knowledge to Census data and can disseminate data more effectively and efficiently. The SDC network builds personal relationships with folks in each state making it much easier to communicate information both locally and back to the Census Bureau.

In summary, the SDC network has the very important role of communicating between the states and the Census Bureau to make data easily accessible, as correct as possible, and as timely as possible.