

Minnesota Evaluation Association

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

2017 RECAP

2017 brought about an almost all-new Board of Directors to the Minnesota Evaluation Association (MNEA). Between the standard rotation of board members every three years, per our by-laws, and other life events, 7 of the 10 members of the 2017 Board of Directors were new. Each board member brought fresh ideas and great enthusiasm to their volunteer role.

MNEA ended the year financially strong, actively engaging members in small and large-scale programs, and seeking to connect with members for various reasons. MNEA is looking forward to strengthening its connections, communities, and programs in 2018 and beyond with you, our friends and colleagues in the MNEA membership and evaluation practice.

MNEA'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

MNEA started the 2017 fiscal year with \$8,514 and closed December 2017 with \$10,017. MNEA received revenue through memberships (\$4,135) and programs (\$115) and spent money on member-related business expenses (\$1,764), and member programming (\$984).

MNEA'S MEMBERSHIP

MNEA ended the year with 194 members, up from 176 at the end of 2016.

Our membership includes:

- 31 student members
- 86 professional members
- 77 organizational members from 5 organizations

If you are a current member of MNEA, thank you for being an active part of this growing community of evaluation peers, mentors, champions, advocates, and users!

MNEA'S CONNECTIONS

Communicating with Members

MNEA's Communications Chair maintains the MNEA website and posts regular communications with MNEA members through emails, website updates and social media postings regarding:

- General membership news;
- MNEA programs and event invitations and updates;
- Job openings and requests for proposals (RFP); and
- Conferences, seminars, and workshops related to evaluation practice and theory.

Nurturing Partnerships

MNEA continued its connection with the Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute (MESI) Spring Training in 2017. Hosting an ice cream social at the end of one of the spring training days, MNEA board members invited MESI participants and MNEA members to come together at the spring training to both network and learn more about MNEA and how to become involved. We had great conversations with new and old members, and we look forward to continuing to support MESI in the future.

MNEA also showed up within the broader American Evaluation Association (AEA) sphere as an active member of its Local Affiliates Council. Melissa Chapman Haynes took an active role in participating in monthly calls and attending and facilitating a session at a pre-conference gathering of local affiliates during AEA's annual meeting in Washington, DC. She also learned about efforts to further align AEA with local affiliates in 2018 during a breakfast meeting with 2017 AEA president, Kathy Newcomer. As AEA continues to find ways to better support local affiliates like MNEA, we will continue to find ways to advocate for our members, our activities, and the topics and discussions that are important to you.

Programming for Members

MNEA Board members supported, facilitated, and promoted 13 events throughout the year. From an ice cream social at University of Minnesota's annual MESI conference to a panel presentation focused on "Measuring Access and Equity in Evaluation," the Board brought MNEA to members throughout the Twin Cities. Here is a list of MNEA's 2017 activity.

Ice Cream Social at MESI Spring Training

March, University of Minnesota, St. Paul Campus

MNEA Board members invited MNEA members to connect with MESI participants and each other during a break in the MESI program

Board-led Meet-Up

May, Blue Door Pub, Minneapolis

Sarah Cohn & Maira Rosas-Lee brought people together to network and brainstorm topics for future gatherings.

Board-led Meet-Up: Evaluation Professionals Discussion

June, Day Block Brewing, Minneapolis

Sarah Cohn & Razeena Shrestha facilitated discussions about how people got into the field of evaluation, networking, and the pros and cons of being an evaluation consultant.

Board-led Meet-Up: Using Qualitative Data in Evaluations

July, Common Roots Café, Minneapolis

Randi Nelson & Elizabeth Cain led a discussion about using qualitative data in evaluation.

Board-led Meet-Up: Creative Strategies When Under-resourced

August, Sweeney's Saloon, St. Paul

Veronica Deenanath & Kate Diamond presented creative evaluation strategies for working with under-resourced organizations.

Board-led Meet-Up: Exploring Project Management in Evaluation Contexts

September, Open Book, Minneapolis

Melissa Chapman Haynes & Veronica Deenanath explored project management skills for evaluators.

Student Event: Evaluation Professionals Roundtable

September, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis Campus

Kate Diamond & Elizabeth Cain brought evaluation professionals together to present to U of M students interested in studying evaluation

Board-led Meet-Up: Planning for Surprises in Evaluation

October, Peace Coffee, Minneapolis

Maira Rosas-Lee & Sarah Cohn presented on how to plan for and respond to the surprises that arise in evaluation projects.

Michael Quinn Patton Book Launch and Reception

October, McKnight Foundation, Minneapolis

In conjunction with the McKnight Foundation, the Board celebrated the launch of two books by Michael Quinn Patton.

AEA Gathering

November, Washington DC

MNEA members attending the AEA annual conference came together to connect and discuss the conference.

Board-led Meet-Up: AEA Debrief

November, Coffee Bene, St. Paul

Sarah Cohn & Kate Diamond peppered AEA attendees with questions about what they learned, discussed, and found interesting from the AEA annual conference

Expert Panel: Measuring “Equity” and “Access”: Evaluation Design, Data Collection, and Other Considerations

December, Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

Sida Ly-Xiong, Ellen Shelton, and Joe Curiel presented how they think about and address issues of access and equity in and through their evaluation work.

Board-led Meet-Up: Reflect and Gather with MNEA

December, Jefe Urban Hacienda, Minneapolis

Melissa Chapman Haynes & Razeena Shrestha gathered with MNEA members to discuss intentional reflection and the use of reflection in evaluation.

MNEA’S STRATEGIC PLANNING

In 2016, the MNEA board began drafting a strategic plan. In 2017, the Board advanced the organization’s planning and action on fulfilling the strategic plan. The Board broke into two subcommittees focused on non-profit management and strategy.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee: (Randi Nelson, Veronica Deenanath, Trupti Sarode) This group sought to focus and prioritize the 2016 strategic directions for the board to begin to tackle. They focused their efforts in 2017 on clarifying who MNEA is here to serve. They laid out a 3-year plan for the other efforts that included focusing on partnerships and strengthening board functions in 2018 and working to develop and initiate an effective business model in 2019.

By-Laws and Mission Subcommittee: (Sarah Cohn, Melissa Chapman Haynes, Maira Rosas-Lee and Razeena Shrestha) This group began the task of reviewing and updating MNEA’s by-laws, a task that most non-profit organizations complete every 5-10 years. MNEA’s current by-laws are a mix of both standard by-laws language as well as policy and procedural documentation. This group worked to draft a pared down version of the by-laws and separate the policies and procedures into a board handbook. Though not yet complete, this group greatly advanced the association’s efforts in clarifying and drafting updated by-laws.

LOOKING TO 2018

The MNEA Board of Directors is looking forward to programming throughout 2018, hosting events around the Twin Cities, and continuing to carry forward the energy and activity of gathering MNEA members together. Each board member is dedicated and committed to advancing MNEA through their volunteer service. In the coming year, MNEA board members hope to connect with each MNEA member to share knowledge, reflect on the evaluator competencies, and learn from professionals in the field and beyond.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Sarah Cohn
Past President	Randi Nelson
Incoming President	Melissa Chapman Haynes
Treasurer	Veronica Deenanath
Secretary	Maira Rosas-Lee
Communications Chair	Emily Subialka Nowariak January-April Ellen Wolter, June-December
Membership Chair	Razeena Shrestha
Program Chair	Trupti Sarode Valerie Franz, January-May
Student Representative	Elizabeth Cain
Student Representative	Kate Diamond