



Washington Evaluators Board Meeting 5/19/2021 – MINUTES

In attendance:

Beeta Tahmassebi, President
Melissa Chiu, Secretary
Jessica Pomerantz, Treasurer
Esther Nolton, Program Chair
Kantahyane Murray, Community Engagement Chair
Fanni Farago, Scholarship co-coordinator
Eric Keys, Scholarship co-coordinator
Maryfrances Porter- co-coordinator for Mentor Minutes, partnership for strategic Impact.
Marie-Ellen Ehounou, Membership Coordinator

Not in attendance:

Katherine Braga, Communications Chair – On Leave
Emily Bango, President-Elect
Patricia Moore Shaffer, Past President
Natalie Donohue, Membership Chair
Courtney Carr, Communications Coordinator and Acting Communications Chair
Kelly Feltault, Program Coordinator
Mindelyn Anderson, Evaluation Without Borders co-coordinator
Katie Pitts, Evaluation Without Borders co-coordinator
Danielle Lane, Program Coordinator
Val Caracelli, New Professional and Student Coordinator

Guests:

Pino Monaco- Smithsonian Institution
Danielle Haywood- 3rd year PhD student at GWU, new professional scholarship recipient

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Agenda Review

2. Governance:

Approval of [last month's meeting minutes](#) (Secretary)

Melissa motioned to approve the April Board meeting minutes. Jessica seconded. **VOTE: approved.**

Review of monthly financials (Treasurer)

Increase in membership is tracking what Josh predicted, and may exceed. He was conservative with his estimates. Membership has been robust. Have an ongoing issue with Wild Apricot payment system, and Cote d'Ivoire is not in there (potential member from Ivory Coast tried to join but could not pay). It's been a month now. Looking to reinstate a Paypal button. Or allow people to be sponsored financially. Want to make sure we are acceptable to as many people as possible. Whether employer or student or someone signing up a friend.

Virtual programming has helped membership from outside of DC area. Ticked up in the last year. Kudos to all the programming, engagement and communications efforts that are attracting people to us.

3. Update on Strategic Planning

The voting members of the Board discussed initial segments of the plan. Will put into a central document by end of the month, then put out to Board for more feedback, hopefully share before the June meeting.

4. Committee Updates:

- **Community Engagement (Mentor Minutes, EWB, Scholarships)**

Scholarship awardee, Danielle Haywood presented on her experience and reflections. Attended trainings- great, webinars, data visualization for data equity. Different ends of the spectrum. No experience outside of academia. Great to interact with individuals to see how things align with coursework. Submitted application to be both a mentor and a mentee-- Help other students, pay that back.

Where she is, there aren't a lot of faculty dedicated to the Program Evaluation concentration, has to take classes outside of Public Policy and Administration. She is more qualitative. Appreciated the workshop. Push policy and practice with qualitative lens. New and emerging space in education, with Andrew Reamer. Using Mixed methods. Had to explain: not doing any hypothesis testing, because it's qualitative.

Here is the course description for the class that Danielle attended at the ELC - <https://encompassworld.com/elc/evaluation-planning-overview/> Encompass training: discussed role of the evaluator, how it lends to different questions. Stakeholders in evaluation: power dynamics,

recognize it and ensure meaningful involvement, gatekeepers, building relationships. Conducting evaluations: what is the purpose and values, can be multipurpose. Value, inclusive, make sure language is inclusive. Evaluation audience: Key questions should include multiple perspectives. Program theory, process, outcomes questions.

Comment: Usually, I add, "giving voice to audiences"

Logic model: rather than thinking about it in left to right order, sequence like: activities, then resources/inputs, outputs, then impact, then outcomes. Logic model checklist.

Comments: I usually start with outcomes and impact. In the LM, now I include key indicators after outcomes.

Implementation questions: unique opportunities? Challenges?

Effectiveness questions.

Take away: the key to doing a good evaluation is asking good questions.

Encompass also has a whole course on appreciative evaluation that looks at asset based approaches.
<https://encompassworld.com/elc/appreciative-evaluation/>

Not tokenism type of involvement, taking the time to discuss up front so everyone has equal understanding.

Why WE selected her: Review committee rated her as excellent, had a strong voice that came across. Specifically addressed our expectations, reflections on our antiracism statement and how you would integrate it into your work. Why applying for it, how she would use it. This was the best in a group of excellent applications.

We've awarded 2 this round and have 2 more to go. Eligibility: People within 5 years of being an evaluator. Applications have been low this year; we hope to get more people. We have good support from reviewers, committed group of 6.

Fanni will work with Communications to announce the second recipient, who will take the Transformative Evaluation course.

Deadline for third round is in two days. Will extend if not enough applications. We have leeway. Next two: Michael Quinn Patton's class. <https://washingtonevaluators.org/New-Professional-Scholarship>. Here is the LinkedIn post: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/washington-evaluators-71b7bb123_washington-evaluators-new-professional-activity-6800405186662723584-h9o9

Please promote.

Eligibility: Don't have to be a member of WE, but do have to be in DMV. Or based in DMV before pandemic. Or a WE member outside of DC.

EWB: nonprofit information session was last week. Katie and Mindelyn now going to matching process. Some people wanted to hear from nonprofits and hear their questions. Played Flipgrid videos from people who volunteered last year. That worked well, discussed their motivations and values. July will have a launch.

Flipgrid- Kantahyane set up a password we can use for anyone else who wants to use it. ***Share with Melissa** to consolidate all passwords in one document. Here is the Flipgrid we created at the beginning of the year to introduce the 2021 board. <https://flipgrid.com/589b63ee>

MM: Maryfrances is one of the MM coordinators going forward. She supported students and early career professionals when she was in academia and now continuing with her company. Other coordinator is Betsy Taperol, GWU graduate student in School of Public Health. Was a MM participant last year. Stood out- bring that perspective to the work. Meeting with Bryce before June 1 to transition work. Will add to Board website, give photos and bios to Courtney. Question from last time about the number of MM matches last year— ***will get from Bryce.** <https://washingtonevaluators.org/Mentor-Minutes> It doesn't have to be a heavy lift to be a mentor. Can determine what you want to support.

Questions: communityengagement@washingtonevaluators.org

- **Programs**

5/27 Applying Racial Equity to Data Viz (members only)

6/3 Being Culturally Responsive in Evaluation Practice (members only)

6/10 How WE Can Meet the Moment (members only)

6/16 June WE Board Meeting

6/24 Creating Opportunities for Evaluation to Advance Racial Equity (members only)

Next month- none will be free and open to public. Did that in the first quarter to promote WE. Hopefully we can get more members. **Please share Esther's LinkedIn posts.**

President's dinner series. 9/7: MM program and mentoring in general, and soliciting ideas about mentorship models that were helpful as mentor/mentee so we can incorporate into the MM program. Did this last month about new professional members. Where can we do more to expand, are we missing anywhere, and what questions should we ask them? Will coordinate with Maryfrances beforehand. Would love to have her there, but ok if can't make it. We are recreating informal dinners and provide some guiding questions to get started. We have very engaged members, so we don't usually get to everyone's question. Then get them to apply to our program.

Discussion of new pricing structure for events

Been thinking about a tiered pricing structure. Some things are open only to members. Some free and open to public. Holiday party: charge \$10-15 even for members, more for non-members. Member Survey: many people didn't want to have to pay for anything extra, such as the holiday party. Others want to access events one-offs without being a member. We also want to give members value, benefits. Current annual membership rate: \$25/\$15 students.

Tentative proposal, no decisions about it tonight. Also think about when to implement.

Non-members: \$5 for social events, such as a President's dinner, Happy hour. \$10 for skill-building events and webinars. These events may inspire people to become members. Hopefully we then don't need to charge for the holiday party.

For people who don't have access, there is an idea of sponsorship, to gift or sponsor a membership for someone who expresses a financial need. Also could sponsor a ticket for specific events.

Another thought is to add a virtual membership rate/tier at the current membership rate (\$25), raise the membership rate (maybe by \$10-15 to cover the holiday party), and lower the student rate (\$0-5). Then we would want to Communicate these increases with members, and link this Action to our antiracism commitments (by redistributing funds in order to increase access and equity).

For students, yet another thought is to have an Organizational rate for universities (and, say, 10 student memberships). Then for students at other universities that don't have an organizational membership, we could have sponsorships.

Also, if we absorb the DC SCEP conference, it would be a huge value add. It's a one-day conference, had high profile keynote speakers. Academic faculty have increasingly less capacity to put it on. It's a huge commitment to elevating students in the area, show their work, and connect to employers. University fees can help this. Universities can donate space too.

Finally, University Ambassadors expect something back too.

We will establish a small task force to discuss. One key lens to consider is complexity and sustainability. We currently have a big board that is very engaged; we won't always have this level of engagement. There is a concern about making commitments that future Boards can't commit to.

If we were to implement a complex pricing structure in Wild Apricot, how would it work and is it worth it? Then if we bring in the money, what do we use it for? Many people don't go to the Holiday party. Might we use an additional scholarship, or scholarship memberships? For donating a ticket- how would it happen? Does someone have to apply for it and who's going to look at it? Maybe just once a year have membership sponsorships?

Jessica should be involved in the **Task force: Esther, Jessica, Natalie**. We'll also put out a call to membership- task forces are a nice way to involve membership.

Let's think of implementing for 2022 and moving forward. Don't pressure ourselves to figure it out right away.

- **Communications**

Courtney is out sick.

- **Membership**

We are reaching out to delinquent members with limited success, and Organizational sponsors-- most are using all of their memberships. Can we ask if they're ok with donating unused organizational spots? ***We first need a plan** for how to distribute the donated memberships, or else something like: you get 5 slots AND WE donates a spot to someone who can't afford the membership fee.

Can reach out to Ph.D. students and professors to raise awareness.

From Beeta Tahmassebi to Everyone: 07:51 PM

5. Board Action Items (if any)

Emily Bango is leaving the area. Esther has put in her name. Will hold a Special election.

Will need a Communications campaign, to explain why there is one person on the ballot after all the discussions in the winter about transparency about elections. Logistically, it's easy to set up the "poll."

Could hold a Special town hall to talk about the special election, explain the process. Hear from Emily and Esther. Can use the event to share the upcoming positions coming up too (President-elect, Secretary). Esther will continue as program chair. Too hard for a new person to step in at this point and would be more work for Esther to appoint a new program chair. Most of the programs are done for the year anyway.

[POST-MEETING NOTE: The bylaws state that a candidate for president must have served on the Board for 9 months prior to being on the ballot. Esther has not been on the Board for that long. (She supported the Board last year, but was not an elected member or a Committee Chair.) Thus, we will have to wait for the regular election cycle in October for her to be on the ballot.]

8:02 PM ADJOURN