

# AEA 2011 November 2-5 Anaheim, CA

Dear Colleagues,

Every year, evaluators from around the world travel from far and wide to participate in the American Evaluation Association (AEA) Conference. This year over 2,500 evaluators representing numerous disciplines are expected to descend upon Anaheim, CA - home of Disneyland, Angel Stadium, Anaheim Gardenwalk, Honda Center - to participate in Evaluation 2011. The theme for this year's conference is "Values and Valuing in Evaluation." During the time we have together, evaluators will discuss the role of values and valuing in evaluation. As evaluators, we are engaged in valuing or judging the quality, merits, or worth of various programs and policies. This process of valuing is aided by our values or beliefs about what is important in an evaluation. Our values influence the focus of the evaluation, the questions that are asked, and the methods that are used. As evaluators, we should also be sensitive to the multiplicity of values and perspectives of different stakeholders.

Given the important role of values and valuing in our profession, how do we prevent our personal biases from seeping into our work? A real concern among evaluators is the possibility that unintentional biases of the evaluator would affect the evaluation -- be it through the choice of outcomes, the standards for judging, or the emphasis on the perspectives of a particular group of stakeholders. On the other side of the issue is the question about whether or not evaluation can ever be value-neutral? If evaluation can be value-neutral, should it be value-neutral? If evaluators are promoting values through their work, how can they be transparent about the values they are promoting so as not to compromise the integrity of their work? As for valuing a program or policy, should valuing be done in terms of being good or bad or should valuing be done in terms of being fair and just? These are some very challenging and thought-provoking questions we will wrestle with during our time together in Anaheim. Through our engaging and respectful discourse, we hope to come up with some strategies that will help us strengthen our practices and help make a difference in the communities that we serve.

See you there!

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## EPE TIG CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The conference program for the Environmental Program Evaluation Topical Interest Group (EPE TIG) is included as a quick reference guide for our members. Please refer to the final conference program for any changes.

Session Title	Session Number	Date	Time	Room
<a href="#"><u>Influence of Evaluator's and Client's Values on Process Evaluation of Low Income Energy Efficiency Program</u></a>	288	Thursday, Nov. 3	10:45 AM to 11:30 AM	Palos Verdes A
<a href="#"><u>Strategies for Tackling Complexity in Environmental Programs and Evaluations</u></a>	335	Thursday, Nov. 3	11:40 AM to 12:25 PM	Monterey
<a href="#"><u>Moving Toward Impact: Alternative Approaches to Meeting the Premium Value of Impact Assessment in Environmental Evaluations</u></a>	493	Thursday, Nov. 3	4:30 PM to 6:00 PM	San Clemente
<a href="#"><u>Environmental Program Evaluation TIG Business Meeting</u></a>	539	Thursday, Nov. 3	6:10 PM to 7:00 PM	Palos Verdes A
<a href="#"><u>Climate Change Education Projects: Advancing the Dialogue Through Effective use of Evaluation Strategies</u></a>	587	Friday, Nov. 4	8:00 AM to 9:30 AM	Palos Verdes A
<a href="#"><u>Is the Footprint Rightly Measured?: Challenges to Evaluate Environmental and Social Performance in Private Sector Projects</u></a>	633	Friday, Nov. 4	10:45 AM to 11:30 AM	Manhattan
<a href="#"><u>The Architecture of Environmental Evaluation: A Literature Review and Network Analysis</u></a>	637	Friday, Nov. 4	10:45 AM to 11:30 AM	Palos Verdes A
<a href="#"><u>Inside the Outdoors: Field Trip to Outdoor Environmental Education Site</u></a>	400	Friday, Nov. 4	1:35 PM to 2:20 PM	Off Site
<a href="#"><u>Innovative Approaches to Environmental Education Evaluation</u></a>	686	Friday, Nov. 4	1:35 PM to 2:20 PM	Palos Verdes A
<a href="#"><u>Evaluating Environmental Education Programs: Lessons Learned From Three Examples</u></a>	837	Saturday, Nov. 5	8:00 AM to 9:30 AM	Palos Verdes A
<a href="#"><u>Using Evaluation to Support Innovation and Strategic Planning in Large Scale National and International Environmental Programs</u></a>	933	Saturday, Nov. 5	12:35 PM to 2:05 PM	Palos Verdes A

## **EPE TIG Business Meeting: Thursday, November 3, 2011 6:10 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

Mark your calendars! The EPE TIG business meeting is scheduled on Thursday, November 3, from 6:10 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. in Palos Verdes A. The purpose of the EPE TIG is to provide a voice for environmental evaluators who participate in AEA. This is your opportunity to share your thoughts on the direction of the EPE TIG and communicate how we can best meet your needs. The first portion of the meeting will involve taking care of housekeeping business including the election of officers for the next two years. If you're interested in becoming more active and increasing your involvement in the TIG, consider serving as a Chair or co-Chair. Following the elections, we'll hear an update from the organizers of the Environmental Evaluators Networking (EEN) Forum which took place in Washington, DC June 23-24. Come and learn how you can tap into this growing network of environmental evaluators. Finally, we'll leave time to get to know each other and the type of work we do through a Networking event. We're looking forward to seeing you Thursday night!

### **Business Meeting Agenda**

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- Election of EPE TIG Chair/Co-Chairs
  - Update/Highlights from the EEN Forum (June 23-24, 2011, Washington, D.C)
  - Networking Event
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## **EPE TIG Field Trip To: Inside the Outdoors**

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**Friday, November 4, 2011  
11:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

### **PUTTING OUR EVALUATION SKILLS TO GOOD USE!!**

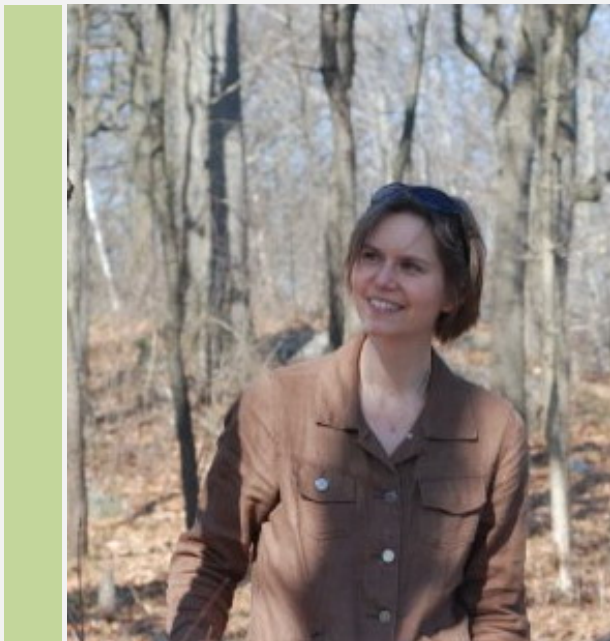
If you're interested in taking a break from the standard conference sessions and putting your evaluation skills to good use, this field trip is for you!! Inside the Outdoors (<http://ito.ocde.us/home.htm>) is an environmental education program independently funded and administered by the Orange County Department of Education. Its mission is to empower students, teachers, parents, and the community to explore natural areas and expand their knowledge. This demonstration session offers participants an opportunity to learn about Inside the Outdoors, a K-12 outdoor science education program that serves 152,000 students annually, providing scholarships to 55,000 low-income students. Its curriculum is aligned with and assesses student learning according to California Science and Social Science standards. The field trip includes a site visit to an Inside the Outdoors program location: Rancho Sonado in Silverado, CA (base of the Santa Ana mountains) -- a 30 minute bus ride from the hotel. The tour will be lead by the Program Administrator. Discussions will cover program goals and activities, ways the program incorporates core values into the curriculum and assessment of state standards, and the program's use of assessment, monitoring, and evaluation. As part of this activity, we will engage in a group brainstorming session to help the program further develop evaluation and assessment ideas that demonstrate the effectiveness of the program's key values. Space for this field trip is limited. FREE transportation to and from the site is provided.

**TO SIGN UP CONTACT:  
Kara Crohn at  
[kara.crohn@gmail.com](mailto:kara.crohn@gmail.com)**

## EPE TIG Member Profiles:

The responses we received regarding the leadership profiles included in the June newsletter were extremely positive! In keeping with the spirit of virtual introductions, this issue of the newsletter spotlights three members of the EPE TIG who will be attending AEA this year. Although these faces may be familiar to some of you, they may be new to others. Please take a moment to review the information they've provided and introduce yourself if you see them in Anaheim!

### Tracy Dyke Redmond



**EPE TIG Member:** 2009 - Present

**Geographic Location:** Cambridge, MA

**Employer:** Senior Associate at Industrial Economics, Inc. ([www.indecon.com](http://www.indecon.com))

**Education:** B.A, Oberlin College; M.C.P. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (environmental policy concentration)

**Area of Specialization:** Compliance assistance and enforcement targeting, small businesses compliance with environmental regulations, climate change mitigation

**Years of Experience in the Field:** 11 in environmental policy, of these 7 spent doing program evaluation

**Professional/ Personal Interests:**

I am dedicated to helping government agencies and philanthropies make the best use of their limited resources. To do this, I use performance measurement and evaluation to identify what strategies work and why, and to prioritize areas for future investment.

**Personal:** I enjoy gardening, hiking, and camping with my husband and five year old daughter. I am also the co-treasurer of my Quaker meeting.

**Methodologies Used:** I use quantitative methods to identify patterns of performance, and qualitative methods to help explain and elaborate on these results. I often use case studies to describe program implementation in specific instances. I am exploring use of real-time evaluation and developmental evaluation in certain contexts.

**Description of Current Work:** I am currently conducting three evaluations for the U.S. EPA, regarding the Agency's hazardous waste determination program, risk-based strategies for inspection targeting, and results of a compliance assistance initiative for auto body shops. In addition, I am helping conduct a five-year evaluation for a major climate change philanthropy, and I am helping conduct a process evaluation regarding enforcement strategies at the Department of Labor.

**How did the evaluator come to be interested in environmental evaluation?** I had worked on implementation of voluntary environmental programs and partnerships, and I wanted to figure out what results the programs were achieving and whether they were worth the investment. I enjoy facilitating mutual, ongoing learning with clients about effective program strategies.

**Advice for other evaluators:** It is very helpful to conduct multiple evaluations on similar topics. While each evaluation can add its own insights, the deepest learning and understanding of nuances in the data come from conducting complementary evaluations that address the same area of inquiry over time.

## Matt Keene

**EPE TIG Member:** 2010 - Present

**Geographic Location:** Washington, D.C.

**Employer:** US Environmental Protection Agency

**Education:** B.S. Biology, Virginia Tech; Masters Environmental Management, Duke University

**Area of Specialization:** People, Environment

**Years of Experience in the Field:** 10

**Professional/Personal Interests:** The effectiveness of everything, complexity theory, surfing, systems thinking, fishing, neocartography, birding, network science, gardening, values research, cooking (not baking), Aristotle, scuba, design and sculpture, saving civilization, peace.

**Methodologies Used:** Whatever's needed

**Description of Current Work:** Coordinating the Environmental Evaluators Network and preparing for the first European EEN event in February 2012 ([www.environmentalevaluators.net](http://www.environmentalevaluators.net)).

Evaluation of the Oregon Paint Stewardship Pilot Program.

Developing (wiki book coming soon) the practice and theory of Fuzzy Logic Models - virtual replicas of program space (example - [www.paintstewardshipprogram.com](http://www.paintstewardshipprogram.com)).

Evaluation of EPA's Ocean Dumping Program. Writing papers with Andrew Knight, Madeliene Bottrill, Susan Clark and Dale Wright.

Exploring the potential of an Architecture of Environmental Evaluation that explains who is evaluating what, where, how and what they're finding.

**How did the evaluator come to be interested in environmental evaluation?:**

While wondering if anything that I was doing to save the planet would make any difference, I stumbled upon the field of evaluation and began applying it to my work.

**Advice for other evaluators:** In evaluation, as in life, we need adults and children...but a lot more children.



## Valerie Williams



**EPE TIG Member:** 2010 - Present

**Geographic Location:** Boulder, CO

**Employer:** University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR)

**Education:** Ph.D. Bio-organic Chemistry, New York University

**Area of Specialization:** Science Education and Government Evaluation, Strategic Planning, Performance Measurement

**Years of Experience in the Field:** 7

**Professional/ Personal Interests:** I enjoy helping programs implement systems of continuous improvement through strategic planning and program evaluation. **Personal interests:** Biking, hiking, yoga and dance  
**Methodologies Used:** Quantitative and qualitative analysis, logic models, performance measurement

**Description of Current Work:** Internal program evaluator for the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) Program, a worldwide environmental science and education program.

**How did the evaluator come to be interested in environmental evaluation?:** Prior to joining UCAR, I worked at the RAND Corporation where I gained most of my experience in science education and government evaluation. However, after joining UCAR and working with the GLOBE Program I became much more engaged in issues related to environmental education evaluation.

**Advice for other evaluators:** Be open to change and growth in new and unexpected directions! Information gained in one area can inform and enhance understanding in other areas. Interestingly, I have found that some chemistry-based principles and ideas have been useful in my evaluation work.

## Evaluation Resources

In an effort to continue to expand your evaluation toolbox, we briefly highlight a small number of evaluation resources we hope you will find helpful. Feel free to share any recommendations you have on any of the resources you find particularly helpful.

- [Program Development and Evaluation – University of Wisconsin - Extension](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/index.html)

**<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/index.html>**

This website is a good resource for evaluation checklists, templates, instructional materials for developing logic models and conducting an evaluation.

### PUBLICATIONS

- *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*. Woley, J., Hatry P., and K. Newcomer. 2010. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition
- *Program Evaluation & Performance Measurement: An Introduction to Practice*. McDavide, J. and Hawthorn, L. 2006. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

## Next Issue: January 2012

- What happened at AEA 2011? : Highlights from your favorite sessions
- EPE TIG Member Profile
- Feature Article
- Evaluation Resources
- Abstracts for AEA 2012
- Current evaluation projects members are working on

## What We Heard From You

In response to our first newsletter, we received some great ideas (see below) for future newsletter topics we'd like to share. We'll plan to incorporate these ideas in future issues of the Newsletter. Please keep the ideas coming!

- Share brief descriptions (1- 2 paragraphs) about some of the specific evaluations members are currently working on.
- Generate a dialogue between two members of the TIG by posing a topical question, and having two different perspectives on the question, ideally where the authors would comment back on each other's perspectives.

### Visit the EPE TIG on the Web!

<http://comm.eval.org/EVAL/environmental/Home/Default.aspx>

The EPE TIG Communications Team is seeking your input. Please contact Yvonne M. Watson [watson.yvonne@epa.gov](mailto:watson.yvonne@epa.gov) or Gitanjali Shrestha [gitanjali.shrestha@email.wsu.edu](mailto:gitanjali.shrestha@email.wsu.edu) if you are interested in contributing to the next issue of the EPE TIG Newsletter.

### Member Profile

Volunteer to share more information about yourself with other members of the EPE TIG for inclusion in the next Newsletter.

### Newsletter Topics

Share your ideas for topics that should be highlighted in future issues of the Newsletter.

### Feature Article

Write and submit an article highlighting an evaluation topic of interest.