



# Southeast Evaluation Association Newsletter

P.O. Box 10125 ❖ Tallahassee, FL 32302

May 2007

President: Dr. Betty Serow

President Elect: Susan McNamara

Secretary: Kathy McGuire

Treasurer: Dr. Ghazwan Lutfi

## 2007 SEA Annual Conference Attracts Over 150 Participants

January 18-19, 2007 marked the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Southeast Evaluation Association, held in Tallahassee, Florida. Keynote speaker and workshop presenter Dr. Michael Morris spoke to the conference theme, "Ethics, Evaluation, and Accountability."

Dr. Morris is a Professor of Psychology at the University of New Haven, Connecticut. He is past chairman of the Ethics Committee of the American Evaluation Association, founding editor of the Ethical Challenges section of the *American Journal of Evaluation*, and is a faculty member of The Evaluator's Institute. His third book, tentatively entitled *Doing the Right Thing: Cases and Commentaries in Evaluation Ethics*, is scheduled to be published later this year.

In the pre-conference workshop on January 17, Dr. Morris led a group in a full-day, highly participatory workshop titled, "Doing the Right Thing: Exploring Ethical Challenges in Evaluation." Participants worked in groups on a series of "point-of-decision" case studies to explore the nature of ethical conflicts in evaluation, the relevance of professional standards to those conflicts, decision-making options, and the ethical implications of putting those decisions into action. His keynote address on the first day of the



conference focused on Ethics, Evaluation, and Accountability.

The conference offered three plenary sessions and 29 concurrent sessions with 48 papers and four roundtables. Session topics included evaluation design issues, randomized field trials and ethics, Medicaid reform, ethics in practice, performance contracting, and professional development. First-time conference attendees were also invited

to attend a roundtable for more information about SEA.

The annual business luncheon took place on the final day, where Betty Serow, President-Elect, officially took office as President. Overall, the conference offered content across diverse disciplines, including health, economic development, education and juvenile justice, and provided multiple networking opportunities for all who attended. Feedback from attendees suggests that continuing to expand the scope of presentations and provide for networking is a direction we want to pursue in future conferences.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I'd like to extend my first 'official welcome' to all SEA newsletter readers! For an organization where all the work is done by volunteers, we have an amazing number of productive activities going on, thanks to a very creative Board (see profiles in this issue) and our 'part-time' coordinator, Bernadette Howard. For those of you that have not yet found your SEA volunteer niche, you will find ample opportunities scattered throughout the newsletter.



Let me start out the year bragging about our 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, held on January 18-19, 2007, at the Tallahassee-Leon County Civic Center. This year we had 152 presenters and attendees from five states. We are truly a regional organization! Next year, for our 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, we'd like to improve on our diversity even more, so be sure and share this newsletter with associates involved in evaluation, program planning, policy analysis, program or project management, and auditing. Diversifying the background of our membership is another goal for the year.

The Program Committee has proposed a monthly Methods and Measurement Series, which started off on Friday, April 27 with a brown-bag lunch discussion on the Retrospective Pretest led by

Mary Kay Falconer of The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida. This technique is increasingly used in social services evaluation, and has gained standing among national funders. References about the technique have been posted to the SEA website. The future success of this brown-bag series depends on the willingness of members to propose and lead discussions about their areas of expertise. Look for more information on this series in this newsletter, and step up to volunteer!

We are also exploring a new initiative for providing training to community-based organizations in conjunction with Tallahassee Community College. Terry Rhodes, a sector representative on the SEA Board, has the lead on this exciting possibility. We'll have more information in the next newsletter.

This is going to be a wonderful year. Plans for the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference are already underway for next February. We are also exploring new professional development opportunities, including using teleconferencing as a way of including members all over the region as both presenters and participants.

Are we missing something you'd like to see? Drop us a line!

Best regards,

Betty Serow, SEA President

## IN MEMORIAM: MARTHA WELLMAN 1947-2007

Martha was the first legislative program auditor in Florida, and had recently completed 30 years with the Florida Legislature.

Over her career, she had coordinated the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability's (OPPAGA) assessments of agency performance measurement systems and had served as a Chief Legislative Analyst in their education policy area.



She was a person with a remarkable knowledge of Florida government, excellent research skills, and a passion for 'speaking truth to power' and serving the Legislature.

Martha was a long-time SEA member and supporter. She was a familiar face at our conferences, sharing her expertise and humor generously. We will all miss her tremendously.

## IN MEMORIAM: ORA MORLIER KROMHOUT 1925-2007

Ora Kromhout and her husband Bob moved to Tallahassee in 1956, where she completed her Ph.D. in educational research and instructional systems design at Florida State University. She worked for many years in Tallahassee as an educational researcher/instructional at FSU, and was a member of SEA from its inception in 1986.

Ora was the president of SEA in 1994 and lent a special warmth, kindness and humor to that office, much to the delight of all who were privileged to



work with her Throughout the years she continued to be very active, volunteering in SEA, chairing the program committee, developing the SEA Strategic Plan, and being one of the stalwart participants of the organization.

After she retired she continued to work as a consultant for state and local offices in high profile educational projects, bringing excellence to all she did. She was loved and will be missed by those who had the opportunity to interact with her.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO A NEW LIFETIME MEMBER OF SEA!



At the annual business luncheon, President-Elect Betty Serow awarded Christine E. Johnson a lifetime membership for her contributions to the continuing professional development of SEA members, and her enthusiasm in promoting the goals of the Association. Lifetime memberships may be accorded to persons who have contributed significantly to the purposes of the Association.

Christine joins three other SEA luminaries in being awarded lifetime memberships. The first went to Dr. Garrett Foster, founder of SEA; the second to Dr. FJ King, a professor that most of the SEA members had studied under in evaluation or measurement; and the third to Susan McNamara for long-time volunteer service, including developing the SEA website and single-handedly serving as the communications arm of the Association for over a decade.

Ms. Johnson joined SEA in 2002, co-chaired the 2003 conference, and co-chaired the Program Committee 2005-2006. She is an Associate in Research at the Learning Systems Institute, Office of the Provost, Florida State University, where she manages research and policy projects related to K-12 education. She has 27 years of experience in educational policy research, evaluation, performance measurement, and project management for a wide variety of organizations, including Florida State University, the Florida Governor's Office, state agencies, and private, non-profit

organizations. She holds an M.S. degree in psychology from FSU and has completed coursework toward a doctorate in psychology with a minor in research and evaluation. Congratulations, Christine!

### INTRODUCING THE SEA BOARD FOR 2007

Our thanks to all the SEA Board members and sector representatives who volunteer their time and talents to make SEA a wonderful organization. SEA Board Officers and Committee Chairs were introduced in SEA's September 2006 newsletter and are as follows. Feel free to contact anyone on this list for more information or to get involved!

#### Officers

President	Dr. Betty Serow betty_serow@doh.state.fl.us
President-Elect	Susan McNamara mcnamars@ahca.myflorida.com
Secretary	Kathy McGuire mcguire.kathy@oppaga.fl.gov
Treasurer	Dr. Ghazwan Lutfi ghazwan.lutfi@famu.edu
Past President	Kaye Kendrick Kaye@KayeKendrick.com

#### Committee Chairs

Conference Chair	Susan McNamara mcnamars@ahca.myflorida.com
Program Co-Chair	Dr. Mary Kay Falconer mfalconer@ounce.org
Program Co-Chair	Dr. Tamara Bertrand Jones TBertrand@admin.fsu.edu

## INTRODUCING THE SEA BOARD FOR 2007

### Program Co-Chair, Dr. Tamara Bertrand Jones, Florida State University

We'd like to give a special welcome to our new Program Co-Chair, Dr. Tamara Bertrand Jones, who joined the SEA board in 2007!

Dr. Tamara Bertrand Jones currently serves as the Director of the Office of Research in the Division of Student Affairs at Florida State University. She is responsible for assisting divisional and departmental efforts in assessment and evaluation, in addition to developing a division-wide research agenda. Her research interests are assessment and evaluation in higher education (student affairs), culturally responsive evaluation, mentoring Black graduate students, and the transition of graduate students to junior faculty.



Dr. Bertrand Jones belongs to many professional organizations in addition to SEA: the American Evaluation Association (AEA), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and American Educational Research Association (AERA). She serves as the Outreach Coordinator for the Multi-Ethnic Issues topical interest group in AEA and as Program Chair for the Research on Evaluation special interest group in AERA. In addition, she currently serves as President of Sisters of the Academy Institute, an organization that promotes collaborative scholarship among Black females in the academy.

### Introducing the Sector Representatives on the SEA Board for 2007

Sector Representatives fulfill several very important roles on the SEA Executive Board. First, each Representative represents the sector of his or her employment (state government, university, local, and private) in Board and other committees' decisions. The Sector Representative is responsible for membership outreach efforts in his/her respective sector, and also serves on the Nominations Committee that names the slate of officers for the next year. This year, the President named representatives of sub-sectors (such as private, for- and not-for-profit) in order to get more participation and wider representation.

### Sector Representative, University: Dr. Lantry Brockmeier, Florida A & M University



Lantry L. Brockmeier is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leader-

ship at Florida A&M University. His professional experiences include being a middle school health educator, high school Biology teacher, evaluator, and psychometrician for a statewide testing program.

Dr. Brockmeier's research interests include educational measurement, research methodology, teacher efficacy, and teacher attribution theory.

### Sector Representative, Private (For Profit): Dr. Fred Seamon, MGT



Dr. Seamon is a Senior Partner with MGT of America, Inc. He is very familiar with the higher education environment, having been involved in virtually all of MGT's projects with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). For over 12 years, he was a full-time faculty member at Florida State University and served an adjunct professor at

Florida A&M University for over 10 years. While at Florida State University, he chaired accreditation site teams for the Council on Social Work Education, including accreditation site visits to HBCUs.

### Sector Representative, Private (Not-For-Profit): Terry Rhodes, Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida

Dr. Terry J. Rhodes is the Director of the Research, Evaluation and Systems Unit for the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida. He has extensive senior management experience in not-for-profit, faith-based, and social service organizations.

The Research, Evaluation and Systems Unit conducts program evaluation and research for varied social service program models serving diverse populations. The unit also designs, develops and hosts Web-based information management systems for programs that facilitate program evaluation and performance management. The unit currently provides evaluation and data management services to over 50 community-based agencies for programs funded by the Ounce of Prevention Fund, and provides contracted services for evaluation and information management with other statewide and local organizations.

Dr. Rhodes serves on the Board of Trustees for Stetson University. He received his undergraduate degree in sociology from Stetson University and his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Rhodes is also a member of the American Evaluation Association.

### Sector Representative, Local (city): Raoul Lavin, City of Tallahassee

Raoul is currently serving as the interim director for the Department of Management and Administration. He has worked for the City of Tallahassee for 14 years. His responsibilities include supervision of all accounting, financial reporting, procurement, budget and policy, and information systems services activities for the City of Tallahassee. He is also a member of the city's Executive Team.

Prior to his current position, Mr. Lavin worked in the city's Office of Budget and Policy in the capacity of Budget Manager, and was responsible for development of the City's annual operating and five-year capital improvement program. Prior to working with the City, Mr. Lavin worked at the State of Florida Department of Revenue, Division of Audits, where he participated in budget development, total quality management initiatives, and legislative analysis.

Mr. Lavin, originally from South Florida, moved to Tallahassee to attend Florida State University. There he received a BA in Political Science and an MPA from the Askew School of Public Administration. He is an active member of the International City/County Management Association and Florida City/County Management Association.

**Sector Representative, Local (schools): Dr. Dogan Tozoglu, Leon County School District**

After completing his doctorate in Instructional Systems at Florida State University, Dogan started working as an information specialist for the Program Monitoring and Evaluation unit within the Teaching and Learning Division, Leon County Schools.



His role is producing the Data Book, a profile of the Leon County School District, and conducting evaluation and research on multiple instructional systems and curricula in the district. He is married with two kids. He enjoys spending his spare time with his family.

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**1<sup>st</sup> Methods and Measurement Series –  
Brown Bag Lunch Discussion: April 27, 2007**

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The SEA Program Committee is considering several options for programs in 2007, but there is one program option we have already initiated. For a monthly “Methods and Measurement Series,” there will be a brown-bag lunch scheduled from 12:00-1:30 on the last Friday of each month.

Dr. Mary Kay Falconer volunteered to lead the first brown bag lunch on April 27, on the Retrospective Pretest, at The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida in Tallahassee. At the beginning of the session, there was a brief overview of the retrospective pretest (RPT) that included a summary of the references cited for this session. A lively discussion among the 15 participants followed. Applications of the method were highlighted by several participants.

Some of the applications discussed were surveying teachers on their implementation of a new teaching approach, evaluating services for refugees, evaluating community-based programs, evaluating parenting programs, and a variety of training programs for management in the corporate sector. The strengths and weaknesses of the method were discussed, with special attention focused on the maximum length of time for respondent retrospection, the selection of the appropriate Likert scale, the importance of the wording for each item, and the need to consider carefully the format for the entire instrument.

At the beginning of the session, the lead for the session circulated an additional reference for use by the participants. This reference was modified to incorporate several points raised during the session and is available at SEA’s website.

We are asking members of SEA to volunteer to facilitate future discussions in SEA’s Methods and Measurement Series, and identify their preferred location. The methods and measurement topics can relate to a research project at your place of employment or a topic of interest you would just like to share and discuss with others. SEA will announce the topic, the facilitator, and the location at least two weeks prior to each session. It is helpful to have a short technical reference shared prior to the session and there might be follow-up among those who have a heightened interest after the session.

If you would like to volunteer for one of the Methods and Measurement Series, please email your name, the topic, and the location for the session to Mary Kay Falconer at [mfalconer@ounce.org](mailto:mfalconer@ounce.org).

**Sector Representative, State: Valerie Fitzpatrick, Office of the Attorney General**



Valerie Fitzpatrick has been a member of the Southeast Evaluation Association for approximately six years. She is a *Certified Internal Auditor* and *Certified Government Auditing Professional* and is currently the Director of Auditing in the Office of the Inspector General of the Office of the Attorney

General. Ms. Fitzpatrick has worked in several other State of Florida agencies, including the Auditor General, the Department of Insurance, and the Department of Environmental Protection.

Ms. Fitzpatrick also owned and operated her own business locally for nine years. She is a member of the Tallahassee Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors, where she currently serves as Treasurer (through May 2007), and has held the post of President in 2003-2004, Vice President 2002-2003, and Vice-President of Programs in 2001-2002.

She is also an active member of the Association of Inspectors General and has previously served as a Board member at large in the Leon Association for the Educators of Young Children. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two sons and traveling whenever possible.

**SEA Coordinator**



Bernadette Howard became the SEA Coordinator in August 2006. She received her B.A. from the University of South Florida and her M.P.A. from the Askew School of Public Administration at Florida State University.

After working as an analyst for the Florida Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability in Tallahassee for almost 10 years, she left in 2002 and is now a full-time mom of three girls.

She is thrilled to serve the association in this part-time capacity.

**POTENTIAL SEA PROGRAMS IN 2007**

The Program Committee needs YOU!

Do you have topics for training workshops or brown bag sessions? What issues would you like to learn more about?

Take 5 minutes to complete the brief survey found at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=367073787859>.

Your participation will help the Program Committee design events with your interests in mind.

Feel free to contact Tamara Bertrand Jones for more information at [tbertrand@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:tbertrand@admin.fsu.edu) or (850) 644-1331.

## BOOK REVIEW

Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. (Eds). (2004). *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

*Reviewed by Sean Little, SEA Member*

Many of the leading figures in Evaluation contributed to the 24 articles that make up this volume: Wholey on Evaluability Assessment, Love on Implementation Evaluation, Newcomer on Surveying, Hatry on using agency records, Kee on Cost-Benefit Analysis, and Bell on Managing Evaluations.

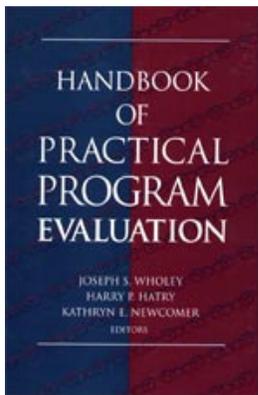
These 24 articles are divided into four sections:

- 1) Designing Performance Monitoring Systems and Evaluation Studies,
- 2) Practical Data Collection Procedures,
- 3) Analyzing Evaluation Data, and
- 4) Getting Evaluation Results Used.

At 685 pages of content, each article averages 29 pages—an easy single sit-down read. As each article is independent, you can stop reading without fear of losing track of the argument.

While not totally quantitative, the book leans heavily in that direction, with less emphasis on qualitative, and even less on mixed methods. While this is a serious flaw, the additional material necessary for a balanced discussion of qualitative and mixed methods would push the page count to an intimidating and un-publishable 1200 pages.

The trans-disciplinary nature of evaluation ensures as much variability in interests, background, and the methodological



orientation of evaluators as in the messiest set of data. This variability also makes it impossible to determine the best article in the book. Depending upon our deficits, each of us would identify a different article.

A book like this can be quite valuable for four types of evaluators:

- 1) those wanting to venture out of their niche of comfort;
- 2) those whose formal training was some time ago and who want to catch up with the field as a whole;
- 3) those of us who drifted into evaluation mid-career without formal training; and
- 4) people who work together but feel they lack a common intellectual basis.

Reading this book together might become an exercise in team building as well as knowledge generation.

This volume brings together many of the best minds in evaluation discussing many of the key issues, but with a quantitative emphasis. It is a worthwhile (and tax deductible) investment.

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Sean Little drifted into evaluation in mid-career. He has an MA in Psychology with a concentration in Social Psychology and currently works in Monitoring and Evaluation in Child Support Enforcement in Fort Lauderdale.

## SOUTHEAST EVALUATION ASSOCIATION

The objectives of the Southeast Evaluation Association are:

To promote improvement and accountability at all levels of policy and programs.

To encourage, stimulate and provide training for evaluation personnel.

To foster and promote program evaluations by providing opportunities to exchange information and ideas relating to evaluation.



To promote the development of theory and the acquisition of knowledge on which to base professional program evaluations.

To promote the use of standards in the evaluation profession.

In accomplishing its mission of "Advancing the Profession," SEA encourages the knowledge and use of appropriate evaluation standards by its members.

In doing so, the Association recognizes the professional judgment of each member decides which standards are best suited to a particular context.

### Want to get involved in SEA?

Well, here's how. Contact SEA at

seacoordinator@southeastevaluation.com.

There are numerous opportunities for members to help out...No contribution is too small!

### Newsletter Staff Deserve Manifold Kudos



Thanks to everyone who helped with this newsletter: Tamara Bertrand-Jones, Mary Kay Falconer, Bernadette Howard, Sean Little, Susan McNamara, Betty Serow, and Christopher Sullivan.



### WANTED:

#### Southeast Evaluation Association Historian:

The historian will collect documents, information, photos, etc., from all the years of SEA and assemble it into a historical document and/or website for the ongoing use and reference of SEA members.

Please contact the SEA Coordinator if you are interested in volunteering for this position.