



AMERICAN
EVALUATION
ASSOCIATION

AEA Board Candidates

Board President-Elect Candidates

Rita Fierro
Karen Jackson

Name: Rita Sinorita Fierro, Ph.D.

Board Position Candidacy: President

Title: Founder and CEO

Affiliation: Fierro Consulting, LLC

Discipline: Sociology, African American Studies

Practitioner and/or Academic Focus: Practitioner and theoretical/methodological focus

Geographic Representation: North America, Europe, Africa

Area(s) of Work Application: Participatory leadership and consensus-building in evaluation, Evaluation for systems transformation, international evaluation, gender responsive and culturally responsive evaluation, trauma-responsive evaluation, regenerative practice in evaluation.

AEA Member Since: 2008

AEA Positions Held: Independent Consulting TIG Chair (2012) and Program Co-chair (2010-2011), Newsletter Editor for the Feminist TIG (2013-2014), Board Member (2016-2019), International Working Group Member (2020-2022).

I'm Italian American, born in the Bronx from Italian parents who decided to move back to Italy when I was 10. I'm the first generation not raised on a farm and college educated in my family. My parents instilled integrity in my bones. My father: used to say to me: "*Rita, a man or a woman who doesn't keep their word is nothing.*" I'm running for President of AEA--because I don't believe we are keeping our word. Our [End Goal 1.0 says](#):

*"The American Evaluation Association exists **to contribute to the common good** by (says many things--the last one is) ...**supporting the contribution of evaluation to the theory and knowledge about effective human action and equitable systems and markets.**"* Ends Goals steer our organization. You can find them under the [About/Our Policies](#) section of our [website](#).

I was on the Board when these Ends Goals were voted in. 1.0 is an overarching goal meaning it should inform all the other End Goals *beneath it* that operationalize it. I aim to see us put actions to our words: for the Board and the association to grow our collective voice and "increase public understanding of challenging issues" so that the public "understands the value of, engages in, and learns from evaluation" (End Goals 1.5 and 1.6). Of course, many evaluators do this, as individuals, firms, or organizations. But these words are in our **collective documents**.

As a collective, how do we steward equitable systems for the common good?

I have some ideas, which will have to be in alignment with others: the Board, the CEO, and the Conference Working Group to come to fruition. For transparency, I want you as a member to know the ideas I'll propose, to:

1. Foster intergenerational café dialogues to engage each generation first alone, then together about accomplishments, frustrations, and desires. As the Africans say: *Sankofa*--we have to know where we came from to know where we're going.
2. Build our collective voice by Unconferencing the AEA 2025 conference. In a complexity-driven think tank, evaluators in the similar funding streams can come together to identify commonalities and critical points to write and present position papers to the public. If that doesn't work--this could be a day of the conference, or the focus of the Presidential Strand.
3. Deliver a press conference on the last day of the conference, to share our results with the public.

4. Practice reflection on the last day: what did we accomplish with this new format? What worked? Didn't work? What suggestions do we have for 2026?

These are some ideas, and more will surface. ***The intention is to break up the silos among evaluators and funding streams to begin pooling our collective knowledge and collective wisdom in service of the common good. I believe that collectively, we have the data to guide our country more so than research think-tanks that extract data with a lot less regard for human potential, human value, and cultural context. I invite us into a discovery of what results we can stand by--together.***

I believe our nation and our world are calling for brave and trailblazing actions. A conference like this may never happen again—or it could become the prototype for a new way of gathering that better serves the equitable world we would like to see. One thing is certain. We will never know if we don't try.

Individuals don't change systems--movements do. How can our collective voice bring forth the world we want to see?

I've been a member of AEA since 2008. My commitment to our profession has matured and grown while I was studying systemic racism, for 30 years. I published [*Digging Up the Seeds of white Supremacy*](#) as a summation of these years of study and it has taken me on a journey of personal transformation over the past three years that has radically shifted my personal healing and my professional practice. white supremacy hinders our vision and our sense of what we can build together. People don't change systems, movements do.

Our profession, even at its best, as many of you know, reinforces systems of unjust power. As a white woman on the quest for liberation, I always have more to learn. As a member of AEA, I'm asking myself:

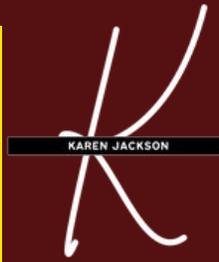
*What's our legacy for the next generations? What is our unique contribution to our country and our world as a collective body? **How can we build our collective voice in service to the common good?***



KAREN JACKSON

CANDIDATE FOR AEA PRESIDENT-ELECT

BALLOT STATEMENT



CANDIDATE PROFILE

Name: Karen T. Jackson

Title: Assistant Professor

Affiliation: North Carolina A&T State University

Discipline: Leadership, Leadership Education, Evaluation, Research Methods, Policy

Practitioner and/or Academic Focus:

Organization and Community Systems influence on Underrepresented Groups, Equity in Evaluation

Geographic Representation: South East, East, US, Virgin Islands

I am delighted to run for president-elect of the AEA. I've been an AEA member since 2013 and after serving the organization in multiple capacities, I've come to understand that AEA as a member-led organization thrives best in an environment where all members feel and know they are important. I know that this type of environment requires us to engage with members and govern through the diverse voices of our members. I believe this can all be accomplished when we're leading from the heart because it is the place where we all connect and can find common ground.

THRIVING ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Cultivating a thriving organizational environment is one of my goals for AEA. I've spoken with many of you over the years and have learned so much about the diversity of values and motivations our members hold by listening to your personal and professional stories. I believe a critical key to leading a professional educational organization like AEA is communication. I will promote and support transparent and authentic communication with our association members.

Experiences I've had doing this include a season where I worked with Habitat for Humanity International to understand the effectiveness of a feedback loop initiative they were implementing with 12 neighborhoods across the country. We learned from this work that intentional participatory engagement of members requires shared responsibility for workload, shared recognition of achievement, thoughtful communication, and engagement in robust discussions.



KAREN JACKSON

CANDIDATE FOR AEA PRESIDENT-ELECT
BALLOT STATEMENT



CANDIDATE PROFILE

Area(s) of Work Application:

Community, Corporations, Foundations, Higher Education, Non-profits

AEA member since: 2013

AEA Positions held:

- Evaluation Oversight Task Force 2016
- Cross TIG
- Communication and Networking Group 2016-17
- Executive Director search committee 2017-18
- AEA summer institute planning and participation 2016-17
- Member Engagement Task Force 2019-22
- Member survey revisions and update 2019-21
- Presidential strand development 2019-20
- Govern for Impact Conference 2020
- Board member at-large 2020-23

GOVERNING WITH AND THROUGH

As a board member at-large during the Covid-19 pandemic and social unrest following the murder of George Floyd, I had an opportunity to demonstrate servant leadership as well as transformative leadership in action. I also led the Clarifying Our Audience board discussions during this same period and was able to promote AEA's organizational role as educator of evaluators, policy informant and advocate for justice. I made contributions to reviewing the board policy manual. My experience leading boards of other organizations in policy governance training and teaching leadership courses on policy governance, finance, ethics and decision-making and leadership for community and civic engagement also benefited the board during my tenure.

THRIVING ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

I have served and participated in multiple capacities with other evaluation focused organizations like the collaborative between the Center for the Advancement of STEM Leadership (CASL) and the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) and Expanding the Bench ACE Network. I have demonstrated dedication to the field of evaluation by mentoring colleagues and thankfully, I have also received coaching and mentoring from evaluators I respect. I believe in the power of evaluation to influence important topics in communities, organizations, and our global society.

AEA thrives best in an environment where all members feel and know they are important, a with and through approach to governance is applied and we value one another's differences by leading from the heart where we connect and find common ground. I know that we will thrive by leading together.

I ask that you vote for me as your next president of AEA.

THRIVING BY LEADING TOGETHER

Board Member-at-Large Candidates

John Baek
Ayesha Boyce
Matt Feldmann
Esther Nolton
Gregory Phillips
Beeta Tahmassebi



Candidate Name: John Baek

Board Position Candidacy: Member-at-Large

Title: Senior Education Evaluator

Affiliation: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Education

Discipline: Education Research, STEM Education

Practitioner and/or Academic Focus: Practitioner

Geographic Representation: Vermont/New England and Washington, DC

Area(s) of Work Application: Government, Internal Evaluation, STEM Education and

Workforce Development

AEA Member Since: 2011

AEA Positions Held:

- AEA Member Survey Working Group member (2014)
- GEDI Host Site (2012-2013)
- Integrating Technology in Evaluation TIG Chair (2022-present) and Webmaster (2020-2021);
- STEM Education and Training TIG Webmaster (2019-2021)
- Internal Evaluation TIG Communications Chair (2021-2023)
- Vermont Evaluation Network Co-chair (2020-2023),
- Local Affiliate Collaborative representative (2018-2022)

My name is John Baek, and I am seeking to be elected as a Member-at-Large of the American Evaluation Association Board. I have been a member of AEA since 2011, and it has become my professional home ever since. I feel privileged to be in a position professionally to take on this responsibility for the evaluation community.

I joined AEA the same year I was hired as an internal evaluator in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Education. I've been a teacher, an engineer, a professor, a project manager, a researcher, but not an evaluator. While I had conducted evaluation activities as an education researcher, I had never been in this kind of full-time role before. I wanted to learn what I didn't know to become a professional. I feel I have grown into this role as I applied what I was learning to my everyday job.

About four years ago, my professional growth started to plateau, I once again turned to AEA to continue my learning trajectory. I found opportunities to grow in leadership roles in the evaluation community. I have served in many roles in service to AEA and leadership (see nominee qualifications). Currently, I serve as Co-chair of the Integrating Technology in Evaluation TIG as well as Co-chair of the Vermont Evaluation Network. Both of these positions have challenged me to develop skills in community-building and volunteer management. Interacting with so many evaluators across contexts, I think I can represent segments of our community that aren't always well represented, like evaluators in rural New England, or small TIGs with less than 300 members.

How might I be one of those who can best serve on a non-profit board? The duty of a board member as I understand it is to help establish policies and inform decisions that shape the direction of the organization to best serve its members. For me, my interests lie in exploring solutions that improve the AEA member experience through a sense of community and inclusion.

As a TIG leader during the pandemic, I've seen TIGs rise to the occasion but also how some TIGs feel really on their own. I think there is infrastructure and support that AEA could be supporting TIG leaders with; things that could serve all TIGs equitably. Standardization and coordination of the website platform is one way to ease the burden on TIG leaders. Webmaster is a role that often goes unfilled; I've served in this role for three TIGs. I understand that the policy governance approach precludes the Board from managing the association staff, but more interaction with AEA staff is needed to better support TIGs.

I also see room for improvement regarding modern organizational risks like climate change. How is AEA addressing climate change? What is our carbon footprint for our conference? We had well over 2,500 attendees last year; that's a lot of carbon. Virtual needs to be part of the solution, but we have to keep trying new things with the in-person conference each year. [Electric Vehicle \(EV\) tourism](#) is where people plan their trips based on the location of charging stations. What if we offered free charging to attendees who drove their EVs to the conference? Could we incentivize attendees to coordinate road trips to the conference, sparking engagement amongst members before they step foot in the host city. Imagine if 25% of attendees didn't burn

a gallon of fossil fuel. What if affiliates hosted regional conferences, where no one stepped on a plane?

Speaking of affiliates, they are such great assets in our evaluation community. For example, here in Vermont, we're building a network of those seeking connections with other evaluators. VEN is not just the sum of our members but also the interrelationships amongst us. I'd love to see AEA explore opportunities to synergize with affiliates.

I raise all of these issues knowing these are not necessarily things I will specifically be able to work on as a member of the Board. I'm ready to learn which levers are available and how to go about pulling them. I hope this just illustrates my interest and my approach. While it's only been a few years since I've entered into leadership roles within the evaluation community, I feel I'm ready for this next step in my career. I believe that I can bring new ideas and different perspectives to the Board. Thank you for your consideration.

Ayesha S. Boyce

Candidate for AEA Board Member at Large

Candidate Name: Ayesha S. Boyce (she, her, hers)

Board Position Candidacy: Board Member-at-Large

Title: Associate Professor

Affiliation: Arizona State University

Discipline: Evaluation and Research Methodology

Practitioner and/or Academic Focus: culturally responsive, equity-focused, and values-engaged evaluation; teaching and learning in evaluation; multi-site, STEM, and contexts with historically and systematically marginalized populations.

Geographic Representation: Southwest U.S. - Arizona

Area(s) of Work Application: education; health; STEM

AEA Member Since: 2008

AEA Positions Held:

- *Committee Member* - AEA 2022 Conference Steering Committee (2021-2022)
- *Member* - AEA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group (2021-present)
- *Committee Member* - AEA Conference 2020 Presidential Program Committee (2020)
- *Co-Chair* - Multiethnic Issues in Evaluation Topic Interest Group (2017-2020)
- *Planning Committee Member* - An AEA Dialogue on Race and Class (2016-2018)
- *Co-Chair* - Science Technology Engineering Mathematics Education Topic Interest Group (2014-2017)
- *Peer Mentor* - Graduate Student and New Evaluator Topic Interest Group (2010-2014)
- *Co-Chair* - Graduate Student and New Evaluator Topic Interest Group (2010-2012)

I believe evaluation can and should embody the values of a more just society.

Who am I?

My name is Ayesha Boyce. I'm a cisgender Black Latina woman. I was born in Chicago, IL. I'm the daughter of a Black American and a Black Panamanian immigrant. My husband is from Nigeria, and we have two young children. I began my evaluation career by stumbling into an evaluation position with the Arizona Department of Education and joined AEA in 2008. I earned a Ph.D. in educational psychology with an evaluation specialization from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2014. I am a tenured associate professor at Arizona State University (ASU). I am a teacher, scholar, and practitioner of program evaluation.

What is my professional experience?

I bring a wealth of experience to this position. I teach classes in evaluation theory and evaluation and research methodology. In my theory courses, I highlight epistemologies of difference and racialized discourses and critique the nature of social inquiry while assisting students to discover their own cultural locations. My methodology courses emphasize defensible technical practice with meaningful attentiveness to ontological, epistemological, and axiological roots. I have been the advisor/co-advisor of a dozen graduate students.

I conduct research that aims to constructively contribute to evaluation theory, practice, and teaching. My scholarship focuses on attending to value stances and issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, access, cultural responsiveness, and social justice within evaluation—especially within multi-site, science technology engineering mathematics (STEM), and contexts with systematically marginalized populations. I also examine and advance teaching and mentoring in evaluation. I have published in the [American Journal of Evaluation](#) (AJE), [New Directions for Evaluation](#), [AEA365](#), and other academic venues. I have led webinars and workshops to teach evaluators how to be culturally responsive and equity-focused.

I co-direct the [STEM Program Evaluation Lab](#), have secured close to 5 million dollars in grant and contract funding, and have evaluated over 60 programs funded by the National Science Foundation, U.S. Departments of Education and Defense, National Institutes of Health, and Spencer and Teagle foundations. I was honored in 2019 as an AEA Marcia Guttentag Promising New Evaluator Award recipient. Learn more about my experience [here](#) and my professional commitments and values [here](#).





Ayesha S. Boyce

Candidate for AEA Board Member at Large

How have I served AEA?

I have enthusiastically served AEA in multiple capacities. I have been a chair/co-chair of the Graduate Student and New Evaluator, STEM Education, and Multiethnic Issues in Evaluation TIGs. I served on the committee that executed the *AEA Dialogues on Race and Class*. I am a member of the AEA DEI Working Group. I served on the 2022 conference steering committee and the 2020 conference presidential strand committee. I have been a conference proposal and AJE manuscript reviewer. I currently sit on the AJE Editorial board and was recently asked to serve as an ad-hoc guest associate editor. I was a guest editor of the recently published [NDE](#) volume. I am a financial and active participant in my local AEA affiliate, AZ Evaluation Network.

Why should you vote for me?

I am passionate about evaluation. My professional identity is that of an evaluator. I believe that evaluation and evaluators can play an important role in challenging the status quo and serving the public good. I am on a mission to share the importance of evaluation and evaluative thinking.

I am passionate about evaluation education. There are so many unique pathways into our field. I am committed to ensuring that new and novice evaluators have multiple opportunities for various types of training. I am also especially interested in ensuring that evaluators from minoritized populations, especially evaluators of color receive [high-quality advising and mentoring](#).

I am passionate about culture and equity. While at UNCG I co-developed curriculum to ensure all program evaluation graduate students are required to take a culturally responsive evaluation course. At ASU I teach anti-racist approaches to evaluation. Equity isn't just something of value; it is part of my personal and professional identity. I believe it is something [worth investigating](#) and is key to my [evaluation role and practice](#).

I am passionate about AEA. AEA is my professional home, and I am interested in contributing to the review of AEA policies, practices, and procedures for systemic inequities. If elected, I aim to continue efforts to advance membership engagement and diverse leadership development. I believe my background, experiences, passion, and commitment make me an ideal candidate for this position. It would be my honor to be elected for an AEA board member-at-large position.



Matt Feldmann

AEA BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE CANDIDATE

PROFILE

Name: Matthew L Feldmann, Ph.D.

Board Position Candidacy: Member at Large

Title: Firm Director, Principal and Co-Owner

Affiliation: Goshen Consulting

Discipline: Education

Practitioner/Academic Focus:

Educator Pipeline, STEM Education, Military Connected Communities, and Evaluation Entrepreneurship

Geographic Representation: Rural, Midwest

Area(s) of Work Application: pre K-12, and Post-secondary education

AEA Member Since: 2011

AEA Positions Held: Independent Consulting TIG (Chair, Communications Chair, informal leadership through the IC Topic Chats), Assessment in Higher Education TIG (Co-Chair, Webmaster), Financial Advisory Board member, TIG Council Member, Regular contributor to pre-conference workshops.

Other Evaluation Positions Held:

Founding President for the Evaluation Association of St. Louis, active member of the Local Affiliates Collaborative

OBJECTIVE

To benefit the American Evaluation Association Board by contributing my knowledge gained from 12 years of very active involvement with AEA, the development of a successful program evaluation firm, and the founding and leadership for the Evaluation Association of St. Louis (EASL).

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

- Are there ways that my local evaluation colleagues could be encouraged to join AEA?
- Are the costs for AEA rising while my benefits are decreasing?
- Could there be more opportunities to engage with my TIG colleagues throughout the year?
- Should AEA provide more frequent and affordable PD opportunities?
- Could there be more frequent and intentional engagement between AEA and the local affiliates?

I am an “everyday” evaluator. I did not originally pursue evaluation as a career path. Like most of our colleagues I found evaluation and have worked to become proficient through experiences with our colleagues. Most of the work of my firm, Goshen Consulting, is done directly with program organizers at educational organizations and children/family-based non-profits. We are constantly learning how to better serve our clients and AEA is a fantastic resource for our team. I am interested in making the AEA resources more available for other everyday evaluators, many of whom are not involved with AEA.

PRIVILEGE AND BOARD DIVERSITY

Board diversity is essential for ensuring creativity, innovation, and meaningful problem-solving. That being said, I am a white, male, cisgendered, small business owner from the Midwest with a doctorate in higher education. I am continuing to learn about and explore my privilege as a critical part of my personal and professional growth. I have a deep belief in social justice and strive to build relationships upon trust, respect, authenticity, and humility.

Matt Feldmann

AEA BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE CANDIDATE

WHY I AM QUALIFIED

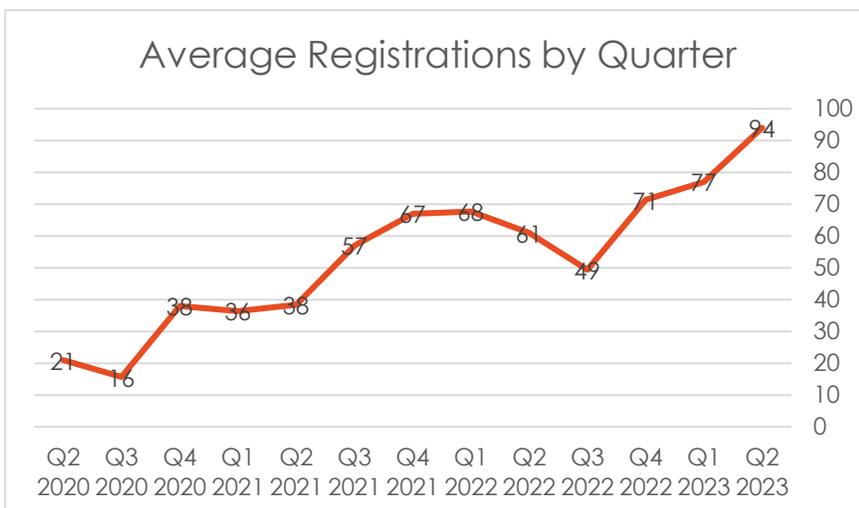
I joined AEA in 2011 and have remained very active with the Association for the past 12 years. Since 2009, I have grown Goshen Consulting, an evaluation focused consulting firm, from one (just me) to a team of 12 professionals serving 40+ clients and 50+ projects. I grew passionate about how to develop a practice, so I found assistance from my AEA IC TIG colleagues. I took what I learned about consulting and actively collaborated to give back to the IC TIGgers through leadership in the IC TIG and then later through workshops and web-based trainings. During the pandemic, I gathered together with AEA friends to create a weekly, free, collaborative interactive Zoom meeting, known as [IC Topic Chats](#). Sensing a need for evaluation professionalization in the St. Louis community I gathered local evaluators together and founded the Evaluation Association of St. Louis. What I have learned is that my professional evaluation association connections and my professional success are tightly coupled.



Over the years, in the name of evaluation professionalization, I have conducted surveys of IC TIG members, created by-laws, wrote contracts, edited and wrote articles for the special NDE journal on independent consulting, led pre-conference workshops, met colleagues for lunch, consulted lawyers, conducted web-based trainings, questioned association costs at FAB meetings, attended thousands of hours of PD meetings, connected colleagues, formed non-profits, and made great friends along the way. I am a huge fan of our Association, but I am also ready to be a critical colleague to keep the Association's focus on creating opportunities for members to connect and ensuring the Association's longevity. If you want a more complete review of my qualifications check out my [AEA Nominee Statements](#).

KEY STATS ON IC TOPIC CHATS

I am particularly proud of the the IC Topic Chats, a weekly virtual event among TIG members. I think this type of programming should be encouraged. Here are some stats on the IC Topic Chats since May 2020.



151
Sessions

8,323
Lifetime
Registrations

716 AEA
Members
served

74
Co-Hosts

Candidate Name:	Esther C. Nolton , PhD, MEd (she/her)
Board Position Candidacy:	AEA Board Member-at-Large
Titles/Affiliations:	<i>Program Officer, Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute Adjunct Professorial Lecturer, American University Immediate Past President, Washington Evaluators</i>
Disciplines:	Research and evaluation methodology; health and education policy; organizational culture and capacity building
Practitioner and/or Academic Focus:	Internal evaluation; organizational learning; data-driven decision making; culturally responsive evaluation; evaluation and data strategy; evaluation policy; strategic planning and management
Geographic Representation:	Washington, DC metropolitan area (USA)
Area(s) of Work Application:	Nonprofit and (US) Federal Government
AEA Member Since:	2018
AEA Positions Held:	<i>Scholar, AEA Graduate Education Diversity Internship (2018-2019) Program Chair, Evaluation Policy TIG (2019-2023) Member, AEA Website Committee (2020-2021) Member, AEA DEI Working Group (2021-2023) Member, AEA Local Affiliate Collaborative (2021-Present) Member, Member Engagement Survey Working Group (2021-Present) Chair, Research on Evaluation TIG (2022-Present) Member, New Directions for Evaluation Editorial Advisory Board (2023-Present) Member, AEA Presidential Conference Committee (2023) Judge, AEA Student Case Competition (2023)</i>

As a passionate evaluation methodologist, strategist, leader, and evangelist, I would be honored to serve as a Board Member At-Large for the AEA. As an “accidental evaluator” who translated skills as a clinician and [clinical researcher to evaluation](#), I bring a wealth of experience and unique perspective from my eclectic background and interests. In addition to being a methodologist, I have specific expertise in facilitating and leading initiatives pertaining to organizational learning, evaluation strategy and policy, DEI, strategic management, and organizational policies and culture. Since formally (and intentionally) identifying as a professional evaluator and claiming AEA as my “home professional association” in 2018, I transferred my years of experience and energy as a caring and compassionate leader, strategic thinker and manager, thoughtful facilitator, and inclusive collaborator to serving the evaluation community via organizations such as AEA and the Washington Evaluators (WE) with unwavering loyalty and dedication.

My introduction to AEA was through the privilege of being selected as an AEA [Graduate Education Diversity Internship](#) scholar (2018-2019, GEDI15 cohort) during my doctoral studies ([PhD in Research & Evaluation Methods](#)), which further demonstrated a mutual commitment to supporting emerging evaluators from historically and currently underrepresented groups. The outpouring of love and support from mentors and peers changed the course of my career and was so meaningful to me that it became a natural desire to reflect the same energy, enthusiasm, and encouragement that I had received. I continue to stand on the shoulders of giants who instilled in me a commitment to advance the field of evaluation and empower the next generation of evaluators.

Prior to joining AEA, I already had a long history of committee and Board service with other organizations. In the last two decades, I have served on numerous Boards, task forces, working groups, and committees. My experiences range from organizational policy development and implementation, strategic planning and management, to enterprise governance

and risk management. Specific to the evaluation community, I have served as an advisor to the [DCSCEP Organizing Committee](#) (2019 to Present), a member of the WE Membership Committee (2019 to 2021), member of the [WE Anti-Racism Task Force](#) (2020), Chair of the WE [Program Committee](#) (2021), [President](#) of the WE Board of Directors (2022), and was the 2020 recipient of the [WE Volunteer of the Year Award](#). I have also been a member of the AEA Website Committee (2020 to 2021), Program Chair (2019 to Present) for the AEA [Evaluation Policy TIG](#) (Topical Interest Group), Chair of the AEA [Research on Evaluation TIG](#) (2022 to Present), member of the [AEA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Working Group](#) (2021-2023), member of the Member Engagement Survey Working Group (2021 to Present), member of the [AEA Local Affiliate Collaborative](#) (2021 to Present), and member of the [AEA Presidential Conference Committee](#) (2023). Drawing from my experience in similar roles, if elected, I would be excited and equipped to advise on and support the governance of the Association.

Additionally, related to my experience in successfully leading the Washington Evaluators local affiliate, I have also had the privilege of serving as an [advisor to the Mongolian Evaluation Association](#) Board since 2021. I also currently serve as a peer reviewer for the *American Journal of Evaluation* and *Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation*, an [Editorial Board](#) member of the *New Directions for Evaluation* journal, regularly review conference proposals each year for several TIGs, and served as a judge for the inaugural [AEA Student Case Competition](#) this year.

In summary, I intend to sustain the same level of business acumen, work ethic, integrity, professionalism, and rigor to my role on the AEA Board as I bring to every role. As an Asian American female internal evaluator in my late-30s, I would represent groups that are currently underrepresented on the Board. I look forward to offering my expertise in governance strategies, member advocacy, and thought partnership to better serve and address the needs of AEA members.

When AEA became my home organization, I felt immediately embraced by my new community. I found an alignment of shared values, camaraderie with fellow evidence nerds, and a sense of belonging that I had never experienced with a professional community before. If elected as a Board member, I hope to help the Association continue fostering this type of hospitality and inclusivity for current and future AEA members. I would appreciate your vote and the opportunity to serve on the AEA Board!

Thank you for your consideration and support!

Candidate Name: Gregory Phillips II (he/him/his)

Board Position Candidacy: Member-at-Large

Title: Associate Professor with tenure

Affiliation: Northwestern University

Discipline: Public Health – Social Epidemiology

Practitioner and/or Academic Focus: Systems-Informed Empowerment Evaluation; LGBTQ+ Evaluation; Community-Engaged and Community-Based Participatory Methods; Social Epidemiology (Stigma as a fundamental cause of health inequities); Health Equity; Infectious Diseases (HIV, COVID-19); Structural Change Efforts.

Geographic Representation: Midwest, based in Chicago

Areas of Work Application: I am a researcher and evaluator, and these disciplines are inextricably linked in my work. My focus is on using my epidemiological training to describe and interrogate the sources of health inequities in partnership with community-based organizations, while my evaluation practice focuses on working collaboratively with community members to develop, implement, evaluate, and refine programming aimed at addressing health injustices. As an infectious diseases epidemiologist by training, most of my work has been focused on HIV and COVID-19, but I also work to study and address the role of stigma – namely, racism, homo/biphobia, and transphobia – in shaping outcomes across mental and behavioral health, chronic illness, and healthcare access, particularly preventive care engagement.

AEA Member Since: 2015

AEA Positions Held (in reverse chronological order):

- Chair, Social Networks in Evaluation TIG 2023 - Present
- Member, Evaluation Policy Task Force 2022 - Present
- Guest Editor, *New Directions for Evaluation (LGBTQ+ Evaluation)* 2022
- Associate Editor, *American Journal of Evaluation* 2019 - Present
- Chair, LGBT Issues TIG 2019 - 2022
- Program Chair, Social Networks in Evaluation TIG 2017 - 2023

NOMINEE STATEMENT

I am humbled and excited to be a candidate for Board Member-at-Large on this year's AEA ballot. I believe deeply in the potential of evaluation as a field to have a positive impact on the world, and I intend to be part of making AEA an organization capable of stewarding that positive impact.

I have been an active member in AEA since 2015, holding leadership positions since 2017, and have been a practicing evaluator since 2007. Both my 16 years of experience in the field, and my perspective as an emerging leader in AEA organizational infrastructure inform my approach to this position, and my commitment to making AEA an organization which embraces growth and change. Throughout my career, I have used a community-centered, community-first approach to my evaluative practice, and intend to encourage a similar praxis throughout AEA. As a white gay cisgender man, I have experienced both privilege and challenges in my life and career, and hope to leverage this privilege to continue to elevate the voices of AEA members who are minoritized based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and many other experiences.

My lived experience as a gay man and the focus of my practice – on the public health impacts of anti-LGBTQ+ stigma and on opportunities to address it – are also central to my candidacy. In the past few years, I have been at the forefront of helping to formally articulate the longstanding but little-acknowledged practices of LGBTQ+ Evaluation, and to help uplift this body of work to a position in the mainstream of our field. Since 2018, my team has been providing trainings to the AEA community on fundamentals of LGBTQ+ Evaluation. We published an article in *American Journal of Evaluation* outlining the state of LGBTQ+ Evaluation, and guest edited a Special Issue of *New Directions for Evaluation* focused on LGBTQ+ Evaluation, published in Fall 2022. I am deeply humbled to see how far awareness of LGBTQ+ Evaluation has come in just a few short years, and I hope to continue pushing the evaluation field to recognize the centrality of this practice to our field through unequivocal statements, required trainings, and greater representation in leadership.

I am also committed to ensuring that AEA is actively nurturing the many insightful, creative, and critical voices of emerging evaluators. I have been extremely proud to have introduced many of my colleagues to this field and supported

them in understanding and finding their place. My employees and mentees are my equal collaborators, and have been instrumental to my team's work in evaluation theory and practice, particularly in our LGBTQ+ Evaluation work. The emerging evaluators I am lucky enough to work with have stepped into leadership roles of their own, including developing and delivering professional workshops for AEA and organizing scholarly panels and presentations – including two sessions led by members of my team being selected as Presidential Strand sessions. As an AEA board member, uplifting the voices of emerging evaluators, particularly those from non-traditional and non-academic backgrounds, would be core to my work.

In addition to emerging evaluator voices, I see real opportunities for AEA to participate actively in creating a more just world. I believe we can and must identify opportunities for organizational co-governance with members of marginalized communities who have historically been served – and just as often, harmed – by our field. All too often, we think of the communities we serve only as evaluands, and sometimes as partners, but we can do more. I believe we should be consciously deconstructing this hierarchy and redistributing power in the governance of AEA to ensure true accountability to, and true partnership with, the communities and organizations we serve.

My leadership experience across a variety of AEA infrastructures and my research and evaluation leadership in other settings, all highlighted above, will help make it possible for me to succeed in this role. All of my work has further extended my dedication to mentorship, training, and community-engaged evaluation. These and other experiences, which span a broad spectrum of duties, contexts, and media, have given me a strong understanding of AEA's work, our national impact (both real and possible), and our collaborative potential.

In sum, my candidacy is about uplifting the many voices and faces of evaluation – making AEA not only a welcoming and empowering organization for our membership, but also a force for good in the world. I hope to have the opportunity to work alongside all of you as a member of the AEA board.

Name: Beeta Shadman Tahmassebi

Board position candidacy: Member-at-Large

Title: Vice President, Strategic Initiatives

Affiliation: EnCompass LLC

Discipline: Evaluation and Organizational Capacity
Building/Development

Focus: Organizational evaluation, mixed methods, appreciative evaluation, developmental evaluation, participatory methods, facilitation, evaluation use, evaluation management, evaluation capacity building

Geographic representation: Based in Washington D.C. area.
Work with clients around the world.

Areas of work application: Gender and Inclusive Development, Climate and Natural Resources, Global Health, Education, Workforce Development, Youth, Organizational Learning

AEA member since: 2015

AEA positions held:

- Past-President, Washington Evaluators, AEA affiliate
- President, Washington Evaluators, AEA affiliate
- President-Elect, Washington Evaluators, AEA affiliate
- Treasurer, Washington Evaluators, AEA affiliate
- Member, AEA Local Affiliate Collaborative
- Member, AEA Professionalization Working Group
- Member, AEA Professional Development Working Group

Online Profiles

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/beeta-tahmassebi-b3057b/>
<https://encompassworld.com/author/btahmassebi/>

CANDIDATE STATEMENT



The American Evaluation Association (AEA) plays a critical role in advancing the field of evaluation by promoting excellence in evaluation practice and theory. As a professional home for evaluators, researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders involved in evaluation across various sectors, the AEA serves the needs of a variety of audiences. The Board must, in turn, regularly connect with current members, and also reach out to new parties of interest, expanding AEA's reach, influence and relevance to the field.

It is my great honor to be considered for AEA Board Member-at-Large. As a member of the organization since 2015, I have been involved in supporting the AEA community in a variety of ways, through working groups, participation in the local affiliate collaborative, as well as through service to AEA's largest affiliate, Washington Evaluators (acting as treasurer, president-elect, president, and past-president). During my time at Washington Evaluators, I helped to lead activities related to membership, communications, programming, community engagement and financial and administrative oversight. I also worked with the Board to manage the transition from in-person to virtual programming and engagement, doubled the membership and sponsorship of the group, and led the development of the organization's 2021-2024 strategic plan.

During my more than 20 years at EnCompass LLC, I have had the opportunity to work extensively in the field of international development, learning not only how to implement monitoring and evaluation projects, but also how to manage teams, contracts, and budgets. **I have developed DEIA programs, supported organizational and staff learning, lead in-person and virtual trainings, developed strategic plans and driven communication and knowledge management efforts.** I have worked with numerous clients, helping them to use data to drive performance improvement and decision making. And I would hope to bring all these different skills to bear in support of the AEA.

In my career I have been deeply committed to advancing evaluation practice, and advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusion. During my tenure as President at Washington Evaluators, we focused on developing programs and a strategic plan that centered on the role evaluators could play in supporting a more equitable society. With regards to the accessibility of learning opportunities, I am particularly proud of launching and building scholarship opportunities for our globally recognized [EnCompass Learning Center](#), which provides tailored education and professional development opportunities related to management and leadership development, gender, monitoring and evaluation, creative reporting, communications and more. As the Executive Director of the ELC, I oversee course selection, curriculum design and development, program delivery and course evaluation. Though we only launched the center in 2020, our achievements have been significant and include:

- 25+ course offerings, 3 certification tracks, scholarship programs (through EvalYouth, Washington Evaluators, etc.), a cadre of globally recognized instructors, numerous free learning events, and engagement with more than 5,000 people who have participated in ELC classes or special programs.
- A reputation for bringing the right combination of theory and application, allowing busy professionals to take away practices that can be immediately applied and used on the job.
- Selection as a learning partner for: Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Labor (DOL), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Federal Drug Association (FDA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Food Programme (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Asian Development Bank, World Bank Group and more.

As an AEA Board Member-at-Large, I would hope to leverage my extensive network and experience to help shape the future of our association, support evaluation professionals, and promote the value and impact of evaluation across different sectors. It would be my honor to work alongside the Board and our members, to support our field and to contribute to a community that is dedicated to learning, development, growth, quality, inquiry and excellence.

Thank you for your consideration.