



Texas Evaluation Network 2023 Institute

August 9 - 11 2023

[Register for this virtual event here!](#)

This Year's Theme: Communication is Key

If you are looking for a place to learn the basics of evaluation or improve your skills as an evaluator, then the Texas Evaluation Network (TEN) 2023 Institute is for you. We are sure to have something for you as an evaluation professional.

OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Thomas Archibald

Thomas Archibald is the Executive Director of the Center for International Research, Education and Development at Virginia Tech, where he is also an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education. He serves on the Board of Directors of the American Evaluation Association (AEA) and is an Associate Editor of the journal Evaluation and Program Planning. A winner of the AEA Marcia Guttentag Promising New Evaluator Award, he received his PhD in Adult and Extension Education from Cornell University in 2013. Especially through his work on evaluative thinking, Tom is passionate about unleashing the power of inquiry to support a more just and sustainable world.

Susan Wolfe

Susan Wolfe has been a community psychologist and evaluator for over 37 years and cannot imagine doing anything else. This combination of education, knowledge, skills, and experience has allowed her to work across many settings that include university-based community research on homelessness, public hospitals, the US Department of Health and Human Services, and in her own consulting business. She received her Master of Arts in Ecological Psychology from Michigan State University, with a graduate cognate in Organizational Psychology and her PhD in Human Development from the University of Texas at Dallas. She has presented at numerous local, state, national, and international conferences and published in various venues, including peer reviewed journals, trade publications, books, and blogs.



Day	Time CST	Session Titles		
Wednesday August 9th	11:00 - 12:00	The Connective Power of Evaluative Thinking		
	12:00 - 1:00	Building the Bench of Evaluators in Texas	Better Being for Clearer Seeing	
	1:00 - 2:00			
	2:00 - 2:30	Empowering Teacher Evaluation Systems: Integrating Data and Collaborative Practices for Enhanced Student Outcomes	Collaborating With Others	
	2:30 - 3:00			
	3:00 - 3:30			
	3:30 - 4:30	A Peek Inside: 4 Non-Profits Talk About Their Evaluation Teams		
	4:30 - 4:50	Humanity: Are We Ready?		
	4:50 - 5:10	Building Evaluation Capacity: Crescer Program as a Connection Between Public and Private Sectors in Promoting Local Economic Benefit		
	5:10 - 5:30	Better Together: Building Local, Community-Wide Evaluation Capacity		
Thursday August 10th	9:00 - 9:30	Empowerment Evaluation	Hacking By The Prompt	
	9:30 - 10:00			
	10:00 - 10:30			
	10:30 - 11:00			
	11:30 - 12:00			
	12:30 - 1:00	Real Talk: Communicating With and About the Communities That We Evaluate	Reflections in Evaluation Practice: Use Outcome Harvesting to Evaluate Complex Initiatives	
	1:00 - 1:30			
	1:30 - 2:00			
	2:00 - 2:30			
	2:30 - 3:00			How LISC and United Way of Greater Houston Aligned Reporting Requirements for Financial Stability
	3:00 - 3:30			
	3:30 - 4:00			Evaluation and Research in Non-Profit Organizations: Past, Present, and Future
4:00 - 4:30				
4:30 - 5:00				
Friday August 11th	9:00 - 9:30	Utilizing Culturally Responsive and Racially Equitable Engagement	Evaluation in Education	
	9:30 - 10:00		Propensity Score Matching	
	10:00 - 10:30			
	10:30 - 11:00			
	11:00 - 11:30	The Ignored Essentials: Practical Guide for Evaluating Intangible Outcomes Like Hope, Trust, Agency, and Faith		
	11:30 - 12:00			
	12:00 - 12:30	Engaging With the Community for Participatory Evaluation		
	12:30 - 1:00			

Keynotes

The Connective Power of Evaluative Thinking

Wednesday August 9th 11:00a - 12:00p

Connection is key in evaluation. It is important to have strong connections between evaluators, program implementers, and program participants; between evaluative conclusions and the evidence that supports them; and between the varied purposes for and approaches to doing evaluation. Evaluative thinking is a useful way to frame the conversation about these and other important connections in evaluation. Evaluative thinking is both a fundamental philosophical concept at the heart of evaluation, and an approach to democratizing evaluation, to unleash the power of inquiry for social change. It is a cognitive and relational process, motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of evidence, that involves identifying assumptions, posing thoughtful questions, marshaling evidence to make judgments, pursuing deeper understanding, and making logically-aligned, contextualized decisions in preparation for action. In this session, we will dive into what evaluative thinking is and why it's important for understanding the power of connection in evaluation.

Thomas Archibald, Executive Director, Center for International Research, Education & Development, Virginia Tech University

Engaging With the Community for Participatory Evaluation

Friday August 11th 12:00p - 1:00p

Doing evaluation “with” community members and community-based organizations yields much more valid and rich findings than doing evaluation “on” them. When outcomes, methods, and interpretations of findings are generated by community members, you end up with outcomes that matter, methods that yield the most in-depth information with representative participation, and valid findings that capture the true meanings from the data. In her keynote address, Dr. Susan Wolfe will share tips of some of the important personal qualities, values, and knowledge that are helpful for working with communities, along with sharing examples of how and why they matter. She will then share strategies for more effective community engagement, followed by ideas for how to engage in participatory evaluations and develop community partnerships from evaluation design through disseminating the findings.

Susan Wolfe, Founder, Susan Wolfe & Associates Community Consulting

Panels

A Peek Inside: 4 Non-Profits Talk About Their Evaluation Teams

Wednesday August 9th 3:30p - 4:30p

The panel discussion will feature a conversation among four evaluators within social service nonprofits about how they structure their work with evaluation within their organizations. Each panelist has a unique perspective based on the structure of their organization and how they engage with program staff to conduct evaluation. The conversation will include how they engage internal and external stakeholders to plan, implement, and report evaluation findings. They will also share their best practices and lessons learned for conducting evaluation within nonprofits. Including:

Kristen Deppe, Director of Research & Evaluation, BakerRipley

Josephine Engles, Evaluation Manager, Mental Health America Houston

Emily Kremer, Program Development & Evaluation Manager, Grants Management & Operational Effectiveness, DePelchin Children's Center

Kristen Wallace, Program Administrator, Humble Area Assistance Ministries (HAAM)

Jessica Davison, Director of Learning, Analytics & Compliance, United Way of Greater Houston

Evaluation and Research in Non-Profit Organizations: Past, Present, and Future

Thursday August 10th 3:30p - 4:30p

How can we make high-quality research and evaluation resources available to the nonprofit organizations that might use this knowledge to change the world for the better? Nonprofit organizations seek to tackle some of the most complex and enduring social challenges, often without the benefit in-house or external learning consultants that can drive data-driven improvement cycles. This tension is one that the three panelists understand deeply and have sought to address in different ways. They facilitate access to research and evaluation for the social sector in the areas of health, education, public safety, and the environment. Dr. Shao-Chee Sim and Nadine Dechausay are evaluation professionals who serve in foundations where they design and fund strategic evaluations to inform the field and further each foundation's mission. Dr. Dianne Palladino leads an in-house evaluation team which shares techniques for measuring the community impact of greenspace and recreational programming. The panelists will share the professional journey that led to their unique professional roles, what they have tried and where they have seen positive returns on investments in evaluation, as well as where they see the future of this effort.

Dianne Palladino, Director of Evaluation, National Recreation & Parks Association

Nadine Dechausay, Director of Evaluation, Community Foundation of Texas

Shao-Chee Sim, Vice President for Research, Episcopal Health Foundation

Evaluation in Education

Friday August 11th 9:00a - 10:00a

Join our panelists as they share their knowledge and expertise on the best practices for conducting practical evaluation in K-12 education.

Akisha Osei Sarfo, Director of Research, The Council of Great City Schools

Anduamlak Meharie, Executive Director of Program Evaluation, Dallas Independent School District

Melissa Steger, Chief Data & Information Systems Officer, Grand Prairie Independent School District

Reflections in Evaluation Practice: Use of Outcome Harvesting to Evaluate Complex Initiatives

Thursday August 10th 2:00p - 3:00p

Outcome Harvesting is a highly participatory, qualitative evaluation approach that is useful for identifying outcomes that have developed over time. Working Partner, a strategy and evaluation firm based in Houston, Texas, utilized Outcome Harvesting to evaluate the outcomes of Episcopal Health Foundation's Texas Community-Centered Health Home Initiative, a proactive, multi-year investment aimed at building the capacity of community-based clinics to go beyond clinical services and work with their surrounding community members to address the conditions that would enhance the health of residents. During this presentation, Working Partner will discuss their experience in implementing an Outcome Harvesting approach, and its value in emerging anticipated as well as unanticipated outcomes, as well as "ripple impacts". Upon conclusion of the presentation, Cindy Lucia will discuss the client's perspective and moderate a group discussion.

[Jessica Pugil](#), Principal, Working Partner LLC

[Bret Sinclair](#), Senior Data Analyst, Working Partner LLC

[Cindy Lucia](#), Program Officer, Episcopal Health Foundation

Presentations

Better Together: Building Local, Community-Wide Evaluation Capacity

Wednesday August 9th 5:10p - 5:30p

This presentation will share initial learnings from the San Antonio Evaluator Pipeline (SAEP) project, a cross-sector collective impact effort launched in early 2023. SAEP project co-directors, Dr. Kurt Steuck (Steuck & Associates LLC) and Katie Sirakos (Spark Storytelling), have assembled a cross-sector roster of participants, including over 70 representatives from local institutions of higher education, independent school districts, nonprofits, and government agencies. The project exists to strengthen San Antonio's evaluation ecosystem by creating collective knowledge and resources, fostering collaboration, and growing awareness of evaluation as a career field.

[Kurt Steuck](#), Director of Evaluation & Research, Steuck & Associates LLC

[Katie Sirakos](#), Founder, Spark Storytelling

Building Evaluation Capacity: Crescer Program as a Connection Between Public and Private Sectors in Promoting Local Economic Development

Wednesday August 9th 4:50p - 5:10p

In partnership with Anglo American (AA) and the Inter-American Development Bank, the Crescer Program, implemented by TechnoServe, aims to contribute to the inclusive economic diversification of five municipalities in Minas Gerais which surround AA's iron ore operations in Brazil. Join me in learning more about how this program promotes local government consultancies in the context of public procurement.

[Isabella Dias Cunha](#), Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning Specialist, TechnoServe

Building the Bench of Evaluators in Texas

Wednesday August 9th 1:00p - 2:00p

Seven funding organizations in Texas are partnering to better understand the current field of evaluators in Texas and develop a philanthropic strategy to continue to build the local field of diverse evaluators practicing equitable evaluation in Texas. While this collaborative project is in process through 2023, presenters will spend approximately half the time sharing more details about the purpose and activities of the project and any initial or emerging findings. Then, presenters will use the second half of the session to facilitate a conversation with participants to gather feedback and insights about the project.

[Brita Blesi](#), Director of Learning & Evaluation, Houston Endowment

[Janelle Roberts](#), Consultant, Ross Strategic

[Jennifer Mineo](#), Senior Research and Evaluation Officer, Episcopal Health Foundation

Hacking By the Prompt

Thursday August 10th 9:30a - 10:30a

Will ChatGPT replace the work of evaluators? Or can it be an opportunity to improve evaluations, and how? Silva Ferretti will share what she learned by "hacking by the prompt"; playing and experimenting with ChatGPT.

[Silva Ferretti](#), Independent Consultant

Humanity: Are We Ready?

Wednesday August 9th 4:30p - 4:50p

Social work practice guidelines serve as a valuable resource for social workers looking to address and alleviate social issues. It is important for social workers to identify the underlying causes of these issues, with research indicating that humanity is often at the root of many problems. To promote humanitarian development, various tools such as awareness-building programs, campaigns, motivational support, and counseling can be utilized. The development of social work practice guidelines must take into account the unique cultural, ethical, and societal norms of each community. Social workers should always approach their work with cultural sensitivity and respect. Ultimately, achieving a peaceful and respectful resolution requires a commitment to human development and a deep understanding of cultural and religious philosophies.

[Mohit Prodhan](#), Student & Emergent Evaluator, Stephen F. Austin State University

The Ignored Essentials: Practical Guidance for Evaluating Intangible Outcomes Like Hope, Trust, Agency, and Faith

Friday August 11th 11:00a - 12:00p

Nonprofit and government programs seeking human change generally encounter the intangible dimensions of humanity such as hope, peace, trust, love, and faith. These domains are so essential that over 100k nonprofit organizations included one of these terms within their name. Despite the powerful relevance, traditional evaluation design either ignores them altogether or minimizes them through reductionistic approaches. This session will provide practical guidance that combines insights and best practices from established evaluation approaches as well as the fields of psychology and medicine. Participants will receive practical design guidance and methodology that has been useful in monitoring and evaluation for a diverse range of organizations.

[Kurt Wilson](#), President, Effect X LLC

Workshops

Better Being for Clearer Seeing

Wednesday August 9th 12:00p - 2:00p

This 2 hour workshop is designed to help evaluators examine the construction of persistent biases that impede excellence in discerning reality that impacts those researchers and evaluators supporting improvement for communities by:

- Identifying the construction and perpetuation of racialized bias that underscores life in the U.S. and impacts global perceptions
- Exploring how these biases creep into our mindset and become embedded in our practices: methods, frameworks, mechanisms and tools,
- Identifying resources and practices to help our personal holistic transformation as data experts: spiritually, emotionally and mentally

Geri Peak, Spiritual Demographer & Chief Insight Facilitator, Two Gems Consulting

Collaborating with Others

Wednesday August 9th 2:30p - 3:30p

One of the domains of AEA Evaluator Competencies is the Interpersonal Domain; this session highlights the role and need of human relations and social interactions to collaborate successfully. Those relationships and interactions hinge solely on connection to others.

Rhonda Williams, Director of Impact & Evaluation, Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas

Empowering Teacher Evaluation Systems: Integrating Data and Collaborative Practices for Enhanced Student Outcomes

Wednesday August 9th 2:00p - 3:00p

Join us for an interactive and informative session designed to assist school leaders in transforming the teacher evaluation process into a collaborative and empowering experience for staff. Through the session we explore best practice, research based techniques for integrating data sources in a way that fosters authentic connections, transforms practice, and improves student outcomes. Participants are encouraged to bring information on their current staff performance data collection and analysis systems and processes.

Nick Kohn, Account Manager, Isobar Public Sector

Michelle Plaushines, Account Manager, Isobar Public Sector

Empowerment Evaluation

Thursday August 10th 9:00a - 12:00p

Dr. Fetterman will highlight two contemporary empowerment evaluation examples presented in his forthcoming book *Empowerment Evaluation and Social Justice: Confronting the Culture of Silence*. The first is a USAID-funded initiative designed to help eliminate tuberculosis in India. The second Starbucks and Feeding America funded empowerment evaluation is focused on food justice, working with food banks across the country as they apply a racial equity lens to their work. The aim in both examples is to demonstrate how to facilitate an empowerment evaluation when a pre-existing evaluation and work plan are operating in place.

[David Fetterman](#), President & CEO, Fetterman & Associates

How LISC and United Way of Greater Houston Aligned Reporting Requirements for Financial Stability

Thursday August 10th 3:00p - 4:00p

This workshop will provide an overview of how LISC and United Way of Greater Houston aligned reporting requirements for financial stability nonprofit partners in their mutual network. It will examine how the two funders aligned their indicators as well as expectations to create a merged report for measuring the outcomes of financial, employment, and benefits coaching programs. The workshop will walk through the process LISC and United Way of Greater Houston did, from identification of the problem to explanation and adoption by partners. We will offer practical tips and tools that we used in the process, and participants will have the opportunity to brainstorm ways they can use a similar process in their own work. There will be time for questions and answers.

[Ellary Makuch](#), Program Officer in Economic Development, LISC Houston

[Jessica Davison](#), Director of Learning, Analytics & Compliance, United Way of Greater Houston

Propensity Score Matching

Friday August 11th 10:00a - 11:30a

Are you a professional looking to make informed decisions based on observational data? Join our workshop on propensity score matching, a powerful technique that helps uncover cause-and-effect relationships. This workshop is designed for practitioners like you, providing a hands-on guide to implementing propensity score matching using the user-friendly R programming language. In this workshop, we'll start with the basics. You'll learn how propensity score matching can help balance different factors between groups, so you can confidently assess the impact of a particular treatment or intervention. We'll explain the underlying concepts in simple terms, covering why and how propensity scores can help reduce biases and give you more reliable insights.

[Meng Fan](#), Research Scientist, Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO)

Real Talk: Communicating With and About The Communities That We Evaluate

Thursday August 10th 1:00p - 2:30p

This session will provide space for participants to explore communication behaviors, beliefs, and tools/tactics to inspire connection between themselves and their stakeholders. Participants will also explore how their word choices and communication about the subjects they evaluate and research findings can be crafted to genuinely capture the voice of communities. Ultimately, the first goal is for participants to understand how communication can be creative or disruptive when working with and reporting on communities that we evaluate. The second goal is for participants to think about how their current communication behaviors can be leveraged to ensure that communication is used as a tool to create connection.

Briana Martin, Founder & Communications Coach, STEMZ

Unleashing the Power of Collaboration: Evaluating Nonprofit Partnerships within the Integrated Client Journey

Thursday August 10th 2:30p - 3:30p

This project presentation will walk through steps taken to identify the collaboration evaluation tool and initial findings from the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory. United Way of Greater Houston (UWGH) leads the Integrated Client Journey (ICJ) that consists of a network of over 100 partners and beyond that coordinate services to support those that identify as ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). The vision is that these organizations are working together to help individuals and families to reach financial stability. This is about ensuring that those in our community have the same opportunities as everyone else to thrive and to prosper. Collaboration among the nonprofit partners is critical component to the ICJ. In order to measure the engagement of the collaboration, UWGH's Learning, Analytics and Compliance team set out to evaluate our collaboration efforts.

Mingyu Lu, Senior Program Analyst, United Way of Greater Houston

Utilizing Culturally Responsive and Racially Equitable Engagement

Friday August 11th 9:00a - 11:00a

This session presents useful frameworks, tools, and approaches for engagement and evaluation using a culturally responsive and racial equity lens. Participants will be introduced to tenets for engaging diverse evaluands and communities and analyzing programs and systems through that lens. It is designed to focus deliberately on an engagement process that is mindful of race, culture, equity, and community context and tools to achieve equitable services and outcomes.

Paul Elam, Chief Strategy Officer, MPHI

THIS YEAR'S SPONSOR

David Fetterman

<https://www.drdauidfetterman.com/>



David M. Fetterman, PhD, is president and CEO of Fetterman & Associates, an international evaluation consulting firm. He is the founder of empowerment evaluation (a community self-assessment approach) and has worked in over 17 countries, including townships in South Africa and Native American reservations, as well as in high tech firms in Silicon Valley, including Google and Hewlett-Packard. He has facilitated a USAID sponsored empowerment evaluation in India focusing on eliminating tuberculosis and Feeding America. A past president of the American Evaluation Association and the American Anthropological Association's Council on Anthropology, he is the recipient of the Paul Lazarsfeld Award for Outstanding Contributions to Evaluation Theory and the Myrdal Award for Cumulative Contributions to Evaluation Practice. His Ted Talk is titled Empowerment Evaluation: Searching for Self-determination and he has written 18 books.

Looking for more TEN?

The Texas Evaluation Network (TEN) is more than an Institute.

Devoted to strengthening ties through educational and professional development, TEN seeks to promote evaluation methods and principles; advocate for evaluation best practices; strengthen evaluation capacities; provide professional/career development opportunities, and institute a venue for networking and the exchange of theoretical, methodological and practical knowledge related to the field of evaluation. Contact us on how to join and become more involved with TEN at <https://www.texasevaluationnetwork.org>

