

Coming Attractions

All times are Eastern except as noted

September 20 12 – 2 p.m.
IN/MI Chaplains Affinity Group
Greencroft Goshen

September 21 2 p.m.
Spiritual Life Coordinators
Teleconference

September 27 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
East coast HR and Chaplain
meeting, Tel Hei Retirement
Community

October 6
West Forum at Lincoln Glen Manor,
San Jose, CA

October 7 2 – 4 p.m.
HR Kansas Affinity Group –
Parkside Homes
Hillsboro, KS

October 10-11
Executive Circle
Oak Brook, IL

October 13 2 p.m.
Executive Assistants
Conference Call

October 13
Midwest Forum at Everence
Goshen, IN

October 18 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.
IN/MI Development
Affinity Group, Everence

November 10 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
OH CEO Circle – Mennonite Home
Communities of Ohio

November 30 1 p.m.
Valued Leadership Webinar
on Change

March 9-11, 2017
ELG/MHA Conference
Jacksonville, FL

Survey Prompts ‘Glimpse Through Different Eyes’

At first glance, the room seems welcoming. There are railings for individuals who may struggle with stability. There is a ramp near the front door. The lighting is good, the sound system adequate.

But how do the flower pots covering the sides of the steps affect a person’s ability to use the railing? Is the ramp actually accessible? There may be adequate lighting and sound for some—but how does it look or sound to those with impaired vision or hearing loss?

This is the careful and important work of Anabaptist Disabilities Network (ADN). As outlined by their mission statement, ADN serves and partners with “church congregations, families and individuals touched by disabilities to nurture inclusive communities.”

Among the greatest challenges, according to Program Director Christine Guth, who has been with ADN for a decade, is the all-too-common assumption that a space is inclusive if it appears

that way at first glance.

“We want to help people get a glimpse, from different eyes, how aspects of their building may be helpful or not so helpful,” Guth said.

To do this, ADN turned to the concept of an accessibility survey.

“Prior to the beginning of our organization, MMA—or now Everence—had some disability advocacy programs. They had developed an original survey of buildings, programs and so on,” Guth explained.

Though MMA decided not to launch these initiatives at that time, their research was passed along to the group of individuals who comprised the then Congregational Accessibility Network. When that particular network



Nyleea Maldonado dances during a service at Iglesia Menonita Arca de Salvación, Ft. Myers, FL.

“Survey” continued >>

MHS and MDS unite to respond to WV flooding

In the wake of July's devastating floods in West Virginia, MHS and Mennonite Disaster Services (MDS) worked together in a first-time collaboration to find volunteers to respond to the crisis.

According to the MDS Volunteer Development Team Leader, Barb Schrag, the call for help originally came from Red Cross via National VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster), an umbrella entity that connects these two groups. While it was not an MDS project per se, MDS served as an important liaison in recruiting help.

Red Cross needed volunteers who had an active registered nurse or mental care license to assist. This narrowed the pool significantly for MDS, prompting Schrag to reach out to MHS Senior Vice President Mim Shirk..

Shortly after MHS put out the call, three qualified volunteers were placed. "I think we all agreed that it was successful--I know Red Cross was appreciative," Schrag said.

"I think [this collaboration] could happen again in the future.

I don't see any reason why it wouldn't," she said.



Mim Shirk, Senior Vice President

The First Word: Bluestem PACE: Finding the assets of being rural

With a looming baby boomer market and a dwindling employee pool, rural providers are looking for creative ways to meet people's needs. Bluestem Communities is taking one approach—PACE (Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly).

In August 2016, the MHS Board visited Bluestem PACE in McPherson, Kan., as they prepared to welcome participants who qualify for nursing home care but are able to stay home with social and medical support.

At the 2004 Mennonite Health Assembly in San Francisco, we heard from Jennie Chin Hansen, CEO of On Lok, the original model for PACE. Next March, at the 2017 Assembly in Jacksonville, we'll hear from Chris Scott, Executive Director of Bluestem PACE, as he shares how this historically urban program is now being expanded into rural Kansas.

Is your organization turning hidden resources into assets? Come to the [2017 Mennonite Health Assembly/Education Leaders Gathering](#), March 9-12, and share your ideas.

>> *“Survey” continued*

became an official entity—ADN—the original MMA info proved a valuable launching point for the young organization’s work.

However, some reformatting was in order. ADN wanted something simpler, easier to use.

“I think of it as an entry-level thing...a starting place. We want to make it so that people can do something that they don’t get totally confused about or overwhelmed by,” Guth said.

The result? ADN developed the one-page [Brief Accessibility Checklist](#). It is largely based on a similar resource compiled by the Christian Reformed Church.

“Sometimes we need reminders to pay attention to those needs that the people we serve have,” said ADN Executive Director Kathleen Nofziger Yeakey. “The survey can be a good tool to help focus on the intangibles—the non-visual things that can be hindrances or barriers to people,” she said.

Nofziger Yeakey added, “Then, once you have noted an issue, you can work at it, figure out what you might do improve the situation or adapt.”

The survey is available online and open to anyone looking for a starting place, a brush-up or simply a second resource.



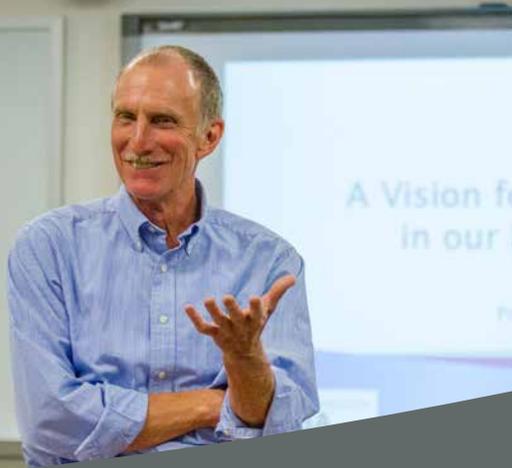
Justin Yoder interprets in sign language as Pamela Yoder (no relation) speaks to the children at College Mennonite Church (Goshen, IN).

In addition, ADN can provide consulting services for organizations looking for direct feedback, potentially on-site. Recently, ADN consulted for Greencroft Communities, Goshen, Ind., an MHS member organization. Interested parties are encouraged to contact Nofziger Yeakey.

With helpful resources like the Brief Accessibility Checklist and consulting services readily available, organizations large and small can continue to work towards

inclusion—and to wrestle with Guth’s important challenge: *“Are we as inclusive of people with disabilities as we want to be—as we think we are?”*

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MHS President/CEO Rick Stiffney was a guest speaker at the Collaborative MBA program's opening residency week, August 8-12, at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU). Stiffney spoke to the third-ever class—the most international yet—comprised of 12 students from six states and three countries.

Stiffney's presentation centered around his personal experience in leadership. He also affirmed the value of cohort-based adult learning.

"It is a really important construct that builds real human relationships and encourages feedback," Stiffney said. "It asks, 'How do our perspectives enrich each other?'"

The Collaborative MBA program is jointly offered by four Anabaptist institutions: Bluffton University, Canadian Mennonite University, EMU and Goshen College. Most classes are offered remotely. Special exceptions, such as the five-day residency, give students a chance to interact face-to-face.

More information about the [Collaborative MBA program](#) can be found online.

Program Feature: "Enterprise Leadership" Planned For Assembly 2017

The upcoming Mennonite Health Assembly and Education Leaders Gathering, themed "Beyond buried treasure," is more than a incidental or convenient meet-up of two Anabaptist organizations.

Though the missions and the services offered by these two entities are different, the challenges are remarkably similar: Underlying Anabaptist communities of faith are changing as legal and regulatory constraints are increasing.

In light of these turbulent times, the 2017 Assembly in Jacksonville, Fla., will include a special offering: "Enterprise Leadership: Systems Thinking as Buried Treasure." The program is jointly convened by MHS and MEA and sponsored by Everence.

Over the course of a half day, approximately 100 CEOs, board representatives and senior leaders from across disciplines will come together to share experiences, brainstorm ideas and explore strategies.

Topics include extending mission and services through collaboration, exploring models that honor local identities and relationships while still considering the potential strengths of various approaches, and developing immediate next steps that acknowledge your organization's current reality.

Learning will happen in a variety of ways—from numerous well-prepared case studies to facilitated table conversations and live interviews with MHS and MEA leadership. Keynote speaker Art DeFeher, a successful entrepreneur who runs a global company, will share provocative input regarding enterprise vision and leadership.

Space is limited and advanced registration is required. To save your spot for "Enterprise Leadership," slated for March 9, 2017, contact Emily Reese today at emily@mhsonline.org.

Staff News

Julie Hillard joined the team at Anabaptist Providers Group (APG) in July. Hillard will serve as Administrative Coordinator at the Lancaster APG office. Hillard's past experience includes working with her husband to create a nonprofit dedicated to raising money for families with experience sudden infant death syndrome, serving at an outpatient rehab center, and overseeing events planning and general communications as a youth director at a church with special needs children. Julie can be reached at Julie@mhsonline.org or 717-560-4296.

Mennonite Health Assembly Schedule at a Glance

Wednesday, March 8

2:00 pm – 8:00 pm..... Executive Circle

Thursday, March 9

7:00 am – 12:00 pmMHS Medical Expense Plan
Governing Council Meeting

8:00 am – 2:00 pm Executive Circle

8:00 am – 8:00 pm Individual Board Meetings

12:00 pm – 5:00 pm..... Enterprise Leadership: Systems Thinking
as Buried Treasure

Friday, March 10

9:15 am – 11:00 am..... MHS Members Meeting

11:30 am – 12:45 am.....Reception for Students

11:30 am – 12:45 pm Opening General Session,
Worship and Keynote

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm.....Lunch

1:45 pm – 2:15 pm.....Beverage Break

2:15 pm – 3:45 pm.....Workshop Session 1

3:45 pm – 4:30 pm.....Reception for Students and Newcomers

3:45 pm – 5:00 pm..... Open Space

5:30 pm – 8:30 pm.....Off-site tour option

Saturday, March 11

8:00 am – 9:00 amBreakfast on your own

9:15 am – 10:30 amWorkshop Session 2

10:30 am – 11:00 am.....Beverage Break

11:00 am – 12:30 pm Worship and Keynote

12:30 pm – 1:45 pm.....Lunch on your own

2:15 pm – 3:30 pm..... Workshop Session 3

2:15 pm – 5:15 pm..... Values-based Leadership Alumni Seminar

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm.....Beverage Break

4:00 pm – 5:15 pm..... Workshop Session 4

6:30 pm – 8:30..... Banquet, Closing General Session and Keynote

Sunday, March 12

9:00 am – 10:00 amWorship (optional)

10:30 am – 8:00 pm Individual Board Meetings

Online Resources

Web

mhsonline.org

Valued Leadership

valuedleadership.org

Facebook

facebook.com/pages/Mennonite-Health-Assembly

Rick's Blog

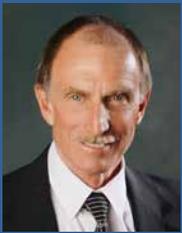
mhsalliance.wordpress.com

Contact Us

1112 N. Main Street
Goshen, IN 46528
(574) 534-9689

MHS/APG Office

2160 Lincoln Highway East,
Suite 7
Lancaster, PA 17602
(717) 560-4296



Rick Stiffney, President/CEO

The Last Word: Strategic work dominates August board meetings

The MHS Board typically engages in more strategic-minded work during its August gathering. This year's meetings, held August 4-5 in Wichita, Kan., were no exception.

Since good strategic work is shaped through critical learning and thoughtful discernment, the MHS Board went 'back to school' with a visit to Bluestem Communities. Here, the group gained insight into the dynamics of governance at Kidron Bethel and Showalter Villa before exploring what Bluestem is discovering through the implementation of [PACE](#).

The MHS Consulting and Corporate Boards reviewed how Mennonite/Anabaptist communities have responded to challenges and opportunities in a broader U.S. context. This look back raised questions that may be critical as the boards consider the future direction of MHS.

Other noteworthy highlights include...

- The MHS Consulting Board did a careful review of the reshaping taking place under Tim Ficker, Managing Director.
- The Commission for Sponsorship continued its discussion on the appointment of individuals to sponsored organizations. The Commission is discerning what criteria would allow for greater diversity while sustaining the core Mennonite/Anabaptist identity and mission of the organization.
- With 2017 budget planning around the corner, the Finance Committee affirmed an improved year-to-date financial performance.
- The Governance Committee continued its work guiding the MHS Board through basic principles of cultural competence and practices for 'safe conversations.'

The MHS Boards and the Commission for Sponsorship meet again November 16-18 in Columbus, Ohio. [Adriel](#) will provide opportunity for continued learning.