



CONNECTIONS

Supporting each other to better serve our neighbors **November/December 2017**

Coming Attractions

All times are Eastern except as noted

November 8-10, 2017

MHS and MHS Consulting board meetings
Atlanta, Georgia

November 16, 2017 1:00 p.m.

Valued Leadership Webinar—*Organizational Change*

January 16, 2018

Regional Chaplains meeting
Goshen, Indiana

January 17, 2018

Regional Peace Church Gathering
Bluffton, Ohio

March 8, 2018

Members meeting
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

March 8-10, 2018

Health Assembly
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Creatively Celebrating Resilience

Scores of epic tales begin with those four words, “once upon a time,” but words alone aren’t enough to make a story great. The best stories require a hero to face risk, danger, and obstacles. *Those* are the stories that remain in our souls and inspire action.

And so it is with our own lives.

We have the capacity to design, imagine, and inspire, but not without facing risk, disappointment, and even failure. It’s only by persevering—despite turmoil and tragedy—that our story transforms into something truly great. Let’s celebrate that.

Mennonite Health Assembly 2018 will be *Celebrating Resilience* in many ways, but especially through creative expression. “My vision is to bring together a group of creatives with a variety of specialties,” says assembly coordinator Vanessa Hofer. “I believe Assembly attendees will find an earnest and meaningful study and celebration of resilience when surrounded by live storytelling, visual art, music, and worship.”

With that in mind, Assembly attendees will enjoy music from award-winning players Ethan Setiawan and Sadie Gustafson-Zook, dramatic presentations from Ted Swartz and Billy Funk, and an introduction to “visual problem-solving” with artist and author Emily Marko.

“Of course, you don’t need to consider yourself an artist to have and to share a powerful story,” says Hofer, adding that four powerful stories about celebrating resilience will also be told by attendees whose submissions were selected in advance by the Assembly Planning Committee. “These incredible firsthand accounts will serve as groundwork for interactive discussions... I can’t wait for attendees to hear these stories of creative resilience within MHS member organizations.”

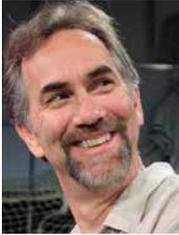
This year’s gathering will be truly different than any prior. The



Ethan Setiawan



Sadie Gustafson-Zook



Ted Swartz



Billy Funk



Emily Marko

“Celebrating Resilience” continued >>



Assembly Registration

This is an inspiring event you won't want to miss. Plan to attend March 8-10, 2018, in Pittsburgh, Pa. Register online at mhsonline.org/health-assembly.

>>“*Celebrating Resilience*” continued

request for stories and learning lab proposals for Assembly 2018 yielded excellent results, and our Planning Committee has been busy crafting a surprise-filled weekend of interactive and immersive programming, designed to both educate and energize.

Get ready to dive into topics like, “Misconceptions and Millennials: Perspectives, Opportunities & Challenges,” “The Ultimate Balancing Act: Mission vs. Success,” and “Stronger Together: Thriving through Consolidation.” And be sure to arrive in time to check out the pre-conference Learning Lab, “Dealing Effectively with Workplace Conflict,” led by Lee Schmucker, MHS Consulting Associate.

If you find you are often looking for creative ways to tackle big ideas with your employees or constituents, you'll love what is in store. And for those looking for our usual excellent training for board members, you'll find those resources, too.

“I believe there is a healthy dose of creativity whenever resilience is at play. I am not sure the two can survive without one another,” says Hofer. “The very synonyms of creativity—inventiveness, imagination, innovation—are the action words that allow us to successfully overcome obstacles or recover from difficult circumstances.”

You are invited to come, be refreshed, encouraged, surprised, and delighted by stories of persistence told through spoken word and moments of creativity at *Celebrate Resilience*, Mennonite Health Assembly 2018.

Organizations that send four or more representatives are eligible for a group discount, and everyone can save \$100 with early bird registration before February 2. First-time attendees are also invited to register at a special rate.

Join MHS on Thursday, March 8, through Saturday, March 10, at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square. Register today at mhsonline.org/health-assembly.

Mennonite Health Assembly is co-sponsored by MHS and Everence.



After Maria

MHS's response to disaster in Puerto Rico

Dr. Rose Gillin and her brother, Jim Alvarez, grew up on the beautiful island of Puerto Rico, but their recent homecoming was far from a celebration. Instead, they put their own heartache aside and used their exceptional qualifications and personal knowledge to assess damage done to their beloved island by hurricanes Maria and Irma.

Determined to deliver vital information to MHS, Gillin, an MD and Alvarez, CFO of Everence, assessed how MHS might give aid in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. "We want to offer support if there are ways that volunteer professionals can be helpful," said MHS CEO Rick Stiffney about the dispatched team. The exploratory visit was also conducted with appreciation and strong support from Mennonite Disaster Service.

Gillin's team remained in Puerto Rico for several days, but weak cellphone service and unreliable Internet prevented them from relaying detailed information. It wasn't until their safe return to Indiana that they could present a full report.

"Everything looked different—devastated—especially the trees," said Gillin about her childhood home. "As we talked with people, we could hear their pain, even as they were working together."

The devastation didn't end there. Most hospitals were—and still are—running on generators that require repairs after weeks of continuous use. Access to water is still limited, and there is concern about the safety of the water that is available. Many homes, churches, and schools have been damaged or destroyed. Driving is dangerous because of downed traffic signals and telephone poles.

Pharmacies are not able to fill prescriptions because they cannot access insurance companies for approval, which is of special concern for the sick and elderly. Diabetic patients are not able to refrigerate their insulin, and those on dialysis are facing an overwhelming treatment challenge.

But the suffering isn't limited to those who are physically ailing. Nearly every resident is subject to damaging amounts of mental and emotional stress, causing many to lose sleep and fear for their safety. The inability to communicate with loved ones has produced anxiety in great measure.

"After Maria" continued >>

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Caguas Hospital—one of many that were damaged by Hurricanes Maria and Irma.

How you can help:

Volunteer healthcare expertise by calling Deloris Rhodes at 888-406-3643.

Donate by sending checks to MHS, 1112 North Main Street, Goshen, Ind 46528.

>>“After Maria” continued

Wide-spread trauma has revealed a need for specialists and counselors in this area.

Even Sistema de Salud Menonita has been directly affected, reporting that more than 100 of their employees need to rebuild or replace their homes. The hospital system has donated \$500,000 to support this effort with the goal of raising an additional \$500,000.

Gillin and Alvarez’s findings mark the beginning of the work to come in Puerto Rico. There is a long and difficult road ahead, and recovery won’t be possible without continued aid.

In light of this, MHS is encouraging constituents to donate dollars and/or volunteer hours to Mennonite Disaster Service, which is working directly with Juan Carlos Colón, moderator of the local Mennonite Conference in Puerto Rico. Any healthcare professionals who are interested in volunteering should be in touch with Mennonite Healthcare Fellowship by calling Deloris Rhodes at 1-888-406-3643 or emailing Deloris@mennohealth.org.

Monies can also be donated to send Carolyn Holderread Heggen, PhD, and other trauma specialists to the island, as well as to the Sistema de Salud Menonita fund for their employees.

Tax deductible contributions for the Sistema de Salud Menonita employee fund or to cover expenses for the assessment team and trauma specialists can be mailed to MHS at 1112 North Main St., Goshen, Indiana 46528.

And in the face of disaster, fear, and the unknown, all are invited to pray for pastors, institutional and hospital leaders, teachers, the sick and elderly, and those who are in need of healing of all kinds on the island of Puerto Rico.





Chinese Delegation Tours MHS Facilities

For nearly two weeks in October, the China Christian Council Study Group explored more than a dozen senior living communities, met with MHS experts, attended workshops, and still managed to see the Liberty Bell during an intensive study of nonprofit older adult services in the state of Pennsylvania.

This group of Chinese delegates was comprised of nine executive leaders and translators and representatives from many different organizations, including Buddhist Master Jing Bo, Vice President of China Buddhist Association, and Xiao Lan of the Tian Ai Commonwealth Foundation in Shanghai.

These visitors arrived on October 15 and lost no time getting started. American hosts Myrrl Byler, Director of Mennonite Partners in China, and Ronald Yoder, International Program Advisor for MHS, welcomed the guests with a warm reception before whisking them off to the first of 13 different community tours.

Over the next five days, the study group visited diverse senior living communities with several objectives in mind. First, these visits showed the range of services available to older adults in the United States. Second, they provided an understanding of government and nonprofit/church-sponsored services—specifically in Pennsylvania. Third, they gave the visitors an opportunity to discover new types of older adult

“Chinese Delegation” continued >>

Online Resources

Web

mhsonline.org

Valued Leadership

valuedleadership.org

Mennonite Health Assembly

mhsonline.org/health-assembly

Facebook

facebook.com/mhsalliance

Rick's Blog

mhsalliance.wordpress.com

Contact Us

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Call for nominations

Do you know someone who fits these qualifications?

- Hardworking professional
- Under the age of 35
- Has leadership potential
- Is interested in leadership or board service in an Anabaptist healthcare setting?

We want to see them grow!

A limited number of emerging leaders will be selected to receive a reduced registration rate for Mennonite Health Assembly.

Submit your nominees to mim@mhsonline.org by December 30.

>>“*Chinese Delegation*” continued

services that they might apply to their own facilities and programs.

The group participated in worship services and Sunday School at East Chestnut Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where they were heartily welcomed by pastor Todd Friesen and his wife Dennette. While there, they also enjoyed a presentation on church involvement in older adult services by MHS Senior Vice President, Emerson Leshner.

Interactive learning filled the second half of the study group’s visit. Workshops covered a variety of topics on everything from management issues to fundraising to daily activities for residents. And this whirlwind tour finished with a banquet hosted by MHS and Anabaptist Providers Group.

Nominate an Emerging Leader

Do you know hardworking professionals under the age of 35 who are brimming with leadership potential? Are they interested in leadership or board service in an Anabaptist healthcare setting? Consider nominating them to attend the 2018 Mennonite Health Assembly, *Celebrating Resilience*, March 8-10 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The Assembly will provide Learning Labs on relevant topics, as well as networking opportunities specifically designed for emerging leaders. Young professionals of diverse backgrounds and cultures are especially encouraged to attend.

Please submit nominations to mim@mhsonline.org by December 30, 2017. Those selected will be offered a reduced registration rate of \$195.

Remember, we have reserved a limited number of space for emerging leaders, so please carefully consider who you would like to nominate—and don’t delay!

Search Committee Update

Valerie Rempel, MHS Search Committee chair, was pleased to report this week that the committee has met and is prepared to recommend a candidate to the full board for approval. As an agency of Mennonite Church USA, final approval of the candidate is required from the Executive Board, but if all goes well the committee hopes to announce a new President/CEO for MHS by the end of the year.

The work of the search committee has come after current President/CEO, Rick Stiffney, announced that he would retire in the spring of 2018 after 20 years of dedicated leadership at MHS.

MHS Valued Leadership Webinar

Daily Practices for Leading Organizational Change: A Webinar

Meetings, emails, deadlines, and more—you have a lot on your plate. How can you find time to develop your leadership skills on top of everything else clamoring for your time and attention?

We have a solution: A bite-sized webinar that fits into even the busiest of schedules led by Emerson Leshner, MHS Senior Vice President, and Rachel Swartzendruber Miller, Vice President of Admissions and Financial Aid at Hesston College.

In only 35 minutes you'll gain tips on how to:

- Invite positive change
- Create space to dream about your organization's potential
- Get beyond "either/or" to "what else?!"
- Assess how Anabaptist values influence our approach to change
- Plus, an open Q&A with Emerson and Rachel

Strong leadership is crucial for healthy organizations; don't neglect its development.

Visit bit.ly/MHSLeadingChange (case sensitive) to reserve your spot for Leading Organizational Change, Thursday, November 16 at 1 p.m. EST / 12 p.m. CST / 11 a.m. MST / 10 a.m. PST.

“Regardless of language, the ‘Three T’s’ of a board self-assessment are fundamental: Transparency, Trust, and Thoughtfulness.”
– Rick Stiffney



Read more about the Three T's on Rick's blog, "Speaking of Nonprofit Boards," at mhssalliance.wordpress.com.



Happy Holidays

We are fast approaching that time of year that inspires reflection and gratitude, and at MHS there are few things we are more thankful for than you—our members and constituents. So we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your partnership, your support, and your friendship. We thank God for the blessing you are to our work and ministry, and we are honored to walk with you through yours.

Wishing you and yours the happiest holidays and most blessed New Year.

—The Staff and Board of MHS

