

June, 2011

I can't believe it's already been 3 months since the MEHA AEC, and I can't believe I'm already 12 weeks into my term as MEHA President. We have a lot to do in the next few months, and I'm excited to work with your elected MEHA Board to get a lot of things accomplished over the next year.

One of the things I stressed at the MEHA business meeting in March was my desire to really get the membership engaged this year. I know from past experience that there are a lot of people who would really like to engage in MEHA, but haven't really been given the opportunity, for various reasons. I want to eliminate those challenges to participation, and make it as easy as possible for members to get involved, and really take ownership of the organization. With declining membership over the past few years, this is both a time of urgency and a time of opportunity.

I've spent some time reconciling survey responses from the past couple of years, and have made a list of individuals who are interested in contributing to committees. I've passed that list of interested folks on to the committee chairs and liaisons, and I have high expectations that those people will be given an opportunity, wherever possible. Some committees seem to attract a lot of interest (in particular, the education committees, and the conference planning committees), so if there are other places you'd like to serve, please send me an email and let me know.

I want to welcome three new MEHA Board members: Jamice Landrum from Saginaw County; Holly Gohlke from MDEQ, Gaylord Field Office; and Tanya Rule, Western U.P. District Health Department. We had our first Board meeting on April 15, and learned that the AEC would finish several thousand dollars in the black. The endowment should continue to ride above the \$100,000 mark; and we had some preliminary discussions about accepting electronic payments on the website. We've also pared down the number of committees to make it easier for liaisons to engage more actively with committee chairs, and we're working on a strategy to increase member involvement in all areas of MEHA. We also intend to discuss the recommendations of the Audit Committee, and have worked to streamlining the budget as much as possible.

With that, I have an open-door policy, there are a lot of you whom I've never met, and I'd love to hear from you. My contact email is bowlingd@meha.net or you can call me in my office at [517-241-7603](tel:517-241-7603).

Darren Bowling
MEHA President