The EENC Board of Directors has been working on a lot of new projects and initiatives this year. Most notably, EENC has hired our first ever Executive Director, Lauren Pyle! The Board has been working toward this goal for many, many years. Lauren’s passion, commitment, and desire to grow EENC is amazing. We have already accomplished a lot with her help and are excited to see it continue as the position moves from part-time to full-time in January 2019.

The Board is invested in making EENC and environmental education accessible and welcoming to all communities. Our 2018 conference theme was “EE for All,” and this became a phrase we used throughout the year. We desire to have our membership be reflective of North Carolina’s community of environmental educators. We also want to help environmental educators learn how to make their programs accessible to all by offering trainings and resources throughout the year.

Going into 2019, and beyond, we will continue to look for opportunities to grow as an organization. Thank you for a wonderful year. Here’s to many more!

- Shannon Culpepper, EENC President 2018
EENC has traditionally moved the annual conference between each section to help ensure it is accessible to all attendees. This year’s conference was all set to take place in Atlantic Beach. Two weeks before the conference, Hurricane Florence made landfall on the coast of North Carolina. Rather than cancel the conference, the EENC Board and Executive Director worked very quickly, and we were able to move it to the Millennium Hotel in Durham. Thank you to everyone who helped make this wonderful conference possible!

Lots of Learning
The conference opened with a workshop, Why Inclusion Matters for your Teaching, Programs, and Facility led by Desiree Adaway and Ericka Hines, along with five local field trips. The next two days included more than 35 sessions, a poster session, and research symposium. Topics included citizen science, getting students outside, offering adult programming, advocacy, STEM, and more. Thank you to all the speakers who gave their time and shared their knowledge!

Keynote Speaker
Friday night included a keynote address from Juan D. Martinez. Juan took us through his experience of growing up in South Central L.A. and his journey with environmental education. He has made a commitment to help empower the next generation of conservation and outdoor recreation leaders. Juan shared his advice for working with traditionally underserved populations, and attendees shared that they felt inspired. Thank you to Juan for the wonderful keynote address.

Congratulations to this year’s award winners!
Each year, EENC recognizes environmental educators, members, organizations, and partners for their valuable contributions to EENC, the North Carolina community, and to the field of environmental education. Award winners are listed below from left to right as pictured above.

Outstanding Newcomer: Chelsea Sloggy
Outstanding Practitioner: Dana Fitz-Simons
Exceptional Environmental Education Program: AmeriCorps Project CONSERVE (Trudie Henninger accepted the award)
Outstanding Service: Erin Hines
Special Recognition: Donna Rogers
Environmental Educator of the Year: Patrick Brannon (not pictured)
On June 15, 2018, sixty educators gathered outside at the secluded Camp T.N. Spencer for a day of hands-on learning and relaxation in nature. The "Nature is Calling" Mini-Conference was hosted by the Piedmont and Western sections, and was EENC’s first mini-conference held in the Piedmont Section. The day began with a networking breakfast on a lakeside screen porch, and continued through four sessions, each offering a variety of presentation options. Participants had the opportunity to engage in activities such as building a garden plot, sampling for pond insects, practicing mindfulness under the shade of an oak, and much more. The presentations all focused in some way on the question of how to incorporate nature in education programs, whether in a formal school setting or in the context of non-formal education. The event concluded with an evening social held at Cabarrus Brewing Company, giving everyone a chance to soak in the lessons of the day and allow their brains to relax. The Mini-Conference was an inspiring way to kick off the summer months, and EENC looks forward to offering more opportunities like these in the future!
The Board of Directors had a busy year in 2018, starting right off in January. A group of five: Brad Daniel, Lauren Pyle, Michelle Pearce, Renee Strnad, and Shannon Culpepper, represented EENC at the NAAEE ee360 Leadership Clinic at Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California. Over four days, the group received training and time to work together to set goals for the organization. The ee360 grant included funding which we used to provide training for Board Members and our Executive Director, and hold a diversity, equity, and inclusion workshop for our membership and the EE community.

Then it was straight into the Board retreat in Atlantic Beach! With the help of a consultant, Dave Chase, the Board developed a strategic plan for 2018-2020 focusing on five categories: diversification, membership, branding/marketing, fundraising, and EE capacity.

The ee360 grant funding enabled the Board to improve their skills related to non-profit management through training. At the March Board meeting, Staci Barfield, with Armstrong McGuire, provided fundraising training. Desiree Adaway provided diversity, equity, and inclusion training in June. Each Board Member also received funding for training related to their specific position.

The Board planned several successful events throughout the year including section events, a Piedmont-Western mini-conference, and the annual conference in September. We ended the year with another successful crowdfunding campaign, raising $36,593!

The Board members contributed 2,682 hours of volunteer service to EENC. Using the federal volunteer rate of $24.69 per hour, the Board contributed a total of $66,225 in volunteerism! That contribution has lead to the success and growth of EENC.

2018 Board Meetings

January 19-21 Board Retreat, Trinity Center, Atlantic Beach
March 3 Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling, Pittsboro
June 2 Asheville Greenworks, Asheville
December 8 NC Museum of Natural Sciences, Raleigh

February - November Monthly Conference Calls

Polar Plunge, January 2018

The Board of directors jumped into the Atlantic Ocean as a reward to our donors for reaching our fundraising goal of $20,000 in 2017.
Budget Summary

In 2018, EENC's total income was $101,257 and total expenses were $102,926.
In addition, EENC awarded $4,000 in scholarships in the form of reduced registration fees for the Annual Conference.
The Board approved this single-year deficit budget due to the one-time and new expenses incurred by hiring our first staff person.

Thank you to our supporters!

Over $2500
ee360
From Inspiration to Impact
Multiple Anonymous Supporters
Arthur Florack, Brad Daniel, Anonymous Donors

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Acorn Naturalists
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Aerin Benevides

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Emerald Isle Realty

$250+
NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Anne Ireton, Elizabeth Stanforth, Lois Nixon, Michael Florack, Samuel H Walker, Scott Fister, Sheila Jones, Stacie Hagwood, Stephanie Avett, and Anonymous.

Additional Support: