



Keynote Speaker: Rita S. Fierro, PhD

23rd Annual Conference

Enhancing Evaluation Through Effective Communication and Interaction

Thursday, May 10, 2018

Lansing Center, Lansing, Michigan

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Michigan Association for Evaluation (MAE) is accepting proposals for posters and breakout sessions at the 23rd annual conference, to be held Thursday, May 10, 2018 at the Lansing Center in downtown Lansing. The deadline for proposals is **Monday, April 2nd, 2018**. Accepted posters will be notified by **Friday, April 6th, 2018**.

You can submit your poster proposal form electronically to Lindsay Giuffre, maevaluate@gmail.com.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Rita S. Fierro, PhD

This year's conference theme is *Enhancing Evaluation through Effective Communication and Interaction*. Dr. Rita S. Fierro, founder and principal consultant of Fierro Consulting, is the scheduled Keynote Speaker. Dr. Fierro will share her personal journey and initial struggles as an independent evaluator and how facing those struggles motivated her to improve her communication and facilitation skills. By identifying the dynamic tensions that are at play in group conversations, including our own biases, she explains how active facilitation can improve conversations and the outcomes of meetings.

This is the basis for the journal article *Enhancing Facilitation Skills: Dancing with Dynamic Tensions in New Directions for Evaluation*, Spring 2016, a volume that she co-edited. She will share examples from her work and demonstrate how to navigate and encourage real conversations that bring people to a mutual goal and understanding. She will also outline specific tools and methods to engage people in one on one or group conversation, sharing her experiences from 15 years of culturally-competent research and evaluation. During a breakout session later in the conference day she will engage her audience while demonstrating multiple facilitation skills.

Dr. Fierro has worked for over 20 years in the fields of facilitation, research and evaluation, teaching, and personal development. She uses predominantly mixed-methods designs to highlight the perspectives of different stakeholders and triangulate data results, especially among vulnerable populations, particularly

women and people of color conducting gender responsive and equity-focused evaluations. She is an intellectual artist who skillfully combines innovative and analytical thinking by bridging groups, networks, and arenas that may seem far apart.

Her most recent interest is in sharing the lessons learned from writing the book *Give Me Back My Child! How the USA System Kidnaps Children*, which is based on 14 years of conversations with mothers who lost their children to foster care. (Due out in 2018) She also speaks on the new frontier for social justice, trauma and peace activism, which she calls *Healing Activism*. A frequent presenter at the American Evaluation Association (AEA), she currently serves on the AEA Board after serving as Chair and Program Co-chair for the Independent Consulting Topical Interest Group for three years.

POSTERS

Preferences will be given to poster submissions that have clear objectives, promote discussion, use concrete and relevant examples, and provide immediate tools, skills and takeaways for attendees. Posters will be featured throughout the day in the main hall as well as at the **Networking Mixer**. The winning poster will receive a \$50 gift card (see below for poster contest rules).

Selected poster submissions made by students will receive a \$10 Visa gift card in addition to a complimentary student membership to the MAE for the upcoming year.

- **How to Enter:** Submit poster proposal in response to Call for Proposals for the 2018 MAE Conference by required submission date.
- **Eligibility:** Open to all individuals except MAE Board members. Submission of a poster proposal does not guarantee entry into the contest. All posters must be screened by the MAE Board prior to eligibility to contest.
- **Number of Entries:** Applicants may enter up to two (2) posters if each submission is unique.
- **Size:** Posters should not exceed 36" x 48".
- **Display:** Easels and supplies to hang posters will be supplied.
- **Judging:** Judging will be conducted exclusively by MAE conference attendees. Entries will be judged (via a ballot box) on the following criteria: effectiveness in making the subject matter interesting and understandable; and overall design, impact, and creativity. In the event of a tie, the MAE Board will decide the final winner.
- **Contest Period:** The judging period will be from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on the day of the conference.
- **Prize:** \$50 pre-paid credit card to the winning entry.
- **Notification of Winner:** The winner will be announced at the **Networking Mixer** event to close out the conference and must be present to collect prize unless prior arrangements are made with the approval of the conference chair.
- **Publicity:** Contest winner agrees to allow MAE to publish their name, organization's name, and description and visual documentation of the work in all MAE media communications now known or later developed.
- **Statement of Originality:** By submitting an entry(ies), the applicant asserts that the entry(ies) is their own work and independently produced.