Over the past decade, Environmental Educators of North Carolina has seen extraordinary growth and 2019 was no exception. Thanks to the hard work of our staff, our Board and the generosity of donors, EENC was able to hire our Executive Director, Lauren Pyle, full time! Having a full time employee allowed us to accomplish additional organizational goals and provide stronger support for North Carolina’s community of environmental educators.

A few highlights include hosting our first joint meeting with the North Carolina Association of Environmental Education Centers, launching a new mini-grant program for members, and attending regional and national trainings with other environmental education leaders. We also hosted our annual conference at the Schiele Museum of Natural Sciences in the Piedmont section, the first since the section was created.

All of these accomplishments would not be possible without our dedicated members, Board and now staff. Thank you for an exciting and productive year and I can’t wait to see where the organization will go next!

- Christine Wittmeier, EENC President 2019

EENC’s mission is to build connections, provide professional development, and promote excellence for North Carolina’s community of environmental educators.

Our vision is to inspire those we work with to create an environmentally literate citizenry.
The EENC Board and staff were excited to host the first full conference in the Piedmont section since its creation in 2015. The Schiele Museum of Natural Sciences in Gastonia provided a unique location with exhibits available throughout the conference for participants to enjoy.

Night at the Museum
The learning and fun continued into the evening with a “Night at the Museum” that included a Planetarium show, private access to the museum and a cocktail hour with a poster session and silent auction. A huge thank you to the Schiele Museum staff for all their help with logistics throughout the weekend.

Our keynote speaker was Dr. Carolyn Finney, who is a storyteller, cultural geographer and author of *Black Faces, Whites Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*. She shared her unique personal story growing up in a primarily white suburb, untold stories of outdoor leaders and how we need to address current relationships before we can have a sustainable future.

Thanks to the generous support from conference attendees, we raised $6,922 for future scholarships and mini-grants in our raffle, silent and live auctions!

Making MemoriEEs
The conference began with two workshops: Methods of Teaching Environmental Education and the new Don’t Waste It! Solid Waste Educator Guide. Those that wanted to explore the area could choose a community service project with the Boys and Girl’s Club and field trips at the US National Whitewater Center, a Food System Tour, Crowders Mountain State Park or Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden. We ended the day with a social at Cavendish Brewing to relax and network.

Thanks to a generous donation in honor of former President, Deborah Miller, the EENC Inclusion Scholarship fund was reestablished!

The next two days were filled with 36 peer driven sessions, a research symposium, section meetings and first time higher education summit and panel of formal educators. During Friday’s awards luncheon, we honored six incredible environmental educators and organizations for their outstanding work in the field. Throughout the three days, over 150 educators attended the conference.

Congratulations to the 2019 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.

**Environmental Educator of the Year:**
Meredith Morgan

**Exceptional Environmental Education Program:**
North Carolina Envirothon (accepted by Erin Hines)

**Outstanding Partner:**
Office of Environmental Education and Public Affairs

**Outstanding Practitioner:**
Mandy Smith-Thompson

**Outstanding Service:**
Brad Daniel

**Special Recognition: Lifetime of Environmental Education:**
Tanya Poole
Western
Western section organized a hike beginning from Kituwah Mound, Mother Town of the Cherokee, to Clingmans Dome, highest peak in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Central
Central section chair organized a social at the North Carolina Symphony to attend Vivaldi’s Four Seasons that combines music with images of nature from across North Carolina.

Piedmont
Piedmont section organized a meetup at Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens for their “Holiday at the Gardens” light display.

Workshops
EENC was one of four states to pilot a state-level Guidelines Trainer Bureau for NAAEE’s Guidelines for Excellence, teaching four workshops in Raleigh, Salisbury, Greensboro and Wilmington. Additionally, in support of EENC’s efforts to make “EE for All,” we held an Equity and The Environment workshop in Asheville at the historic YMI Cultural Center.

EENC Echoes
Our members-only newsletters reached 8,037 educators across the state in 2019!

NAAEE Webinars
The North American Association of Environmental Educators hosts monthly webinars with a variety of topics. EENC co-sponsored eight webinars, which reached 1,297 people and an additional 1,808 views of the recordings online.

EENC Outreach
EENC attended statewide and regional events to foster publicity, partnerships, and outreach, including NAAEE’s conference, NC Science Teacher Association’s conference, NC Office of EE’s Certification Celebration, and many more, reaching 947 people in 2019!
Flash Mob, January 2019
The Board of directors performed a dance flash mob at The Schiele after a successful crowdfunding campaign in 2018, raising $36,966 for EENC.

EENC Board of Directors

An all-volunteer Board of Directors governs EENC, and 100% of our board members contribute financially to the organization each year. The 2019 Board consists of sixteen members who work to seek funding for the organization and manage the budget; plan the annual conference, mini-conference, and other events; manage and recruit members; and much more. Section Chairs organize section-specific events, and help spread the word about the activities of members within their section.

Left to Right: Corey Sperling, Christine Wittmeier, Trent Stanforth, Chris Goforth, Stephanie Avett, Kelly Hendrick, Mara Mitchell, Jessica Metz, Erin Hines, Shannon Culpepper, Brad Daniel, Amy Renfranz, Chelsea Sloggy

The Board of Directors is an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that helped make all of EENC’s 2019 accomplishments a reality. In January, the Board met at Crowder’s Ridge Camp in Gastonia for the annual Board Retreat where we worked on updating the strategic plan, reviewed membership levels and even had time for a silly flash mob at the Schiele!

March was another busy month with our Mini-Conference and Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance’s (SEEA) Leadership Summit. Board members and staff received valuable training, networked with other Southeastern EE organizations and devoted time to develop a membership plan for the organization. SEEA awarded each affiliate $5,000 to implement their plan and EENC conducted a membership survey in partnership with North Carolina State University.

In June, Lauren Pyle and Shannon Culpeper attended the ee360 Leadership Clinic in Pacific Grove, California and received support for implementing organizational plans. The Board also planned several successful events including a “Feast with the Beasts” at Grandfather Mountain and a fundraiser in Asheville. The year ended strong with a successful crowdfunding campaign that raised $37,161 for the organization! The Board members contributed 2,676 hours of volunteer service to EENC. Using the federal volunteer rate of $25.43 per hour, the Board contributed a total of $68,050 in volunteerism!

2019 Board Meetings

January 11-13  Board Retreat, Crowder’s Ridge, Gastonia
March 16  Cape Fear Botanical Gardens, Fayetteville

February - November  Monthly Conference Calls

June 8  Henderson County, Hendersonville
December 7  Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, Four Oaks

EENC Board of Directors

An all-volunteer Board of Directors governs EENC, and 100% of our board members contribute financially to the organization each year. The 2019 Board consists of sixteen members who work to seek funding for the organization and manage the budget; plan the annual conference, mini-conference, and other events; manage and recruit members; and much more. Section Chairs organize section-specific events, and help spread the word about the activities of members within their section.

2019 Board of Directors

President: Christine Wittmeier
President-Elect: Amy Renfranz
Past-President: Shannon Culpepper
Secretary: Mara Mitchell
Treasurer: Aaron Jennings
Communications Chair: Chris Goforth
Education Chair: Corey Sperling
Membership Chair: Trent Stanforth
Policy Chair: Brad Daniel
Resource Development Co-Chair: Chelsea Sloggy
Resource Development Co-Chair: Emily Walker
Eastern Section Chair: Elissa Anderson
Central Section Chair: Stephanie Avett
Piedmont Section Chair: Erin Hines
Western Section Chair: Jessica Metz

The Board of Directors is an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that helped make all of EENC’s 2019 accomplishments a reality. In January, the Board met at Crowder’s Ridge Camp in Gastonia for the annual Board Retreat where we worked on updating the strategic plan, reviewed membership levels and even had time for a silly flash mob at the Schiele!

March was another busy month with our Mini-Conference and Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance’s (SEEA) Leadership Summit. Board members and staff received valuable training, networked with other Southeastern EE organizations and devoted time to develop a membership plan for the organization. SEEA awarded each affiliate $5,000 to implement their plan and EENC conducted a membership survey in partnership with North Carolina State University.

In June, Lauren Pyle and Shannon Culpeper attended the ee360 Leadership Clinic in Pacific Grove, California and received support for implementing organizational plans. The Board also planned several successful events including a “Feast with the Beasts” at Grandfather Mountain and a fundraiser in Asheville. The year ended strong with a successful crowdfunding campaign that raised $37,161 for the organization! The Board members contributed 2,676 hours of volunteer service to EENC. Using the federal volunteer rate of $25.43 per hour, the Board contributed a total of $68,050 in volunteerism!

2019 Board Meetings

January 11-13  Board Retreat, Crowder’s Ridge, Gastonia
March 16  Cape Fear Botanical Gardens, Fayetteville

February - November  Monthly Conference Calls

June 8  Henderson County, Hendersonville
December 7  Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, Four Oaks

EENC Board of Directors

An all-volunteer Board of Directors governs EENC, and 100% of our board members contribute financially to the organization each year. The 2019 Board consists of sixteen members who work to seek funding for the organization and manage the budget; plan the annual conference, mini-conference, and other events; manage and recruit members; and much more. Section Chairs organize section-specific events, and help spread the word about the activities of members within their section.

Left to Right: Corey Sperling, Christine Wittmeier, Trent Stanforth, Chris Goforth, Stephanie Avett, Kelly Hendrick, Mara Mitchell, Jessica Metz, Erin Hines, Shannon Culpepper, Brad Daniel, Amy Renfranz, Chelsea Sloggy

The Board of Directors is an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that helped make all of EENC’s 2019 accomplishments a reality. In January, the Board met at Crowder’s Ridge Camp in Gastonia for the annual Board Retreat where we worked on updating the strategic plan, reviewed membership levels and even had time for a silly flash mob at the Schiele!

March was another busy month with our Mini-Conference and Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance’s (SEEA) Leadership Summit. Board members and staff received valuable training, networked with other Southeastern EE organizations and devoted time to develop a membership plan for the organization. SEEA awarded each affiliate $5,000 to implement their plan and EENC conducted a membership survey in partnership with North Carolina State University.

In June, Lauren Pyle and Shannon Culpeper attended the ee360 Leadership Clinic in Pacific Grove, California and received support for implementing organizational plans. The Board also planned several successful events including a “Feast with the Beasts” at Grandfather Mountain and a fundraiser in Asheville. The year ended strong with a successful crowdfunding campaign that raised $37,161 for the organization! The Board members contributed 2,676 hours of volunteer service to EENC. Using the federal volunteer rate of $25.43 per hour, the Board contributed a total of $68,050 in volunteerism!

2019 Board Meetings

January 11-13  Board Retreat, Crowder’s Ridge, Gastonia
March 16  Cape Fear Botanical Gardens, Fayetteville

February - November  Monthly Conference Calls

June 8  Henderson County, Hendersonville
December 7  Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, Four Oaks

EENC Board of Directors

An all-volunteer Board of Directors governs EENC, and 100% of our board members contribute financially to the organization each year. The 2019 Board consists of sixteen members who work to seek funding for the organization and manage the budget; plan the annual conference, mini-conference, and other events; manage and recruit members; and much more. Section Chairs organize section-specific events, and help spread the word about the activities of members within their section.

Left to Right: Corey Sperling, Christine Wittmeier, Trent Stanforth, Chris Goforth, Stephanie Avett, Kelly Hendrick, Mara Mitchell, Jessica Metz, Erin Hines, Shannon Culpepper, Brad Daniel, Amy Renfranz, Chelsea Sloggy

The Board of Directors is an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that helped make all of EENC’s 2019 accomplishments a reality. In January, the Board met at Crowder’s Ridge Camp in Gastonia for the annual Board Retreat where we worked on updating the strategic plan, reviewed membership levels and even had time for a silly flash mob at the Schiele!

March was another busy month with our Mini-Conference and Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance’s (SEEA) Leadership Summit. Board members and staff received valuable training, networked with other Southeastern EE organizations and devoted time to develop a membership plan for the organization. SEEA awarded each affiliate $5,000 to implement their plan and EENC conducted a membership survey in partnership with North Carolina State University.

In June, Lauren Pyle and Shannon Culpeper attended the ee360 Leadership Clinic in Pacific Grove, California and received support for implementing organizational plans. The Board also planned several successful events including a “Feast with the Beasts” at Grandfather Mountain and a fundraiser in Asheville. The year ended strong with a successful crowdfunding campaign that raised $37,161 for the organization! The Board members contributed 2,676 hours of volunteer service to EENC. Using the federal volunteer rate of $25.43 per hour, the Board contributed a total of $68,050 in volunteerism!

2019 Board Meetings

January 11-13  Board Retreat, Crowder’s Ridge, Gastonia
March 16  Cape Fear Botanical Gardens, Fayetteville

February - November  Monthly Conference Calls

June 8  Henderson County, Hendersonville
December 7  Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, Four Oaks
In 2019, EENC’s total income was $142,042 and total expenses were $146,067. In addition, we awarded $3,260 in scholarships in the form of reduced registration fees for the Annual Conference. Finally, EENC performed a financial audit that indicated the organization is in accordance with general accounting principles.