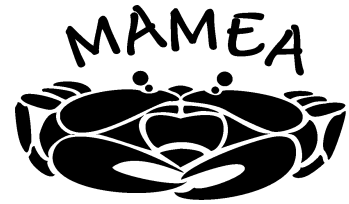


# MAMEA State Rep "How-To" Guide

Rev.10/09



Thank you for your willingness to serve as a MAMEA State Representative! The following “how-to” guide outlines the responsibilities of this role and identifies some timing of State Rep tasks. It directs you to MAMEA documentation about State Rep duties and offers some tips and examples gleaned from the activities of past State Reps.

## **Important Documents to Review:**

Visit the MAMEA website, [www.mamea.org](http://www.mamea.org) There are important documents you’ll want to review on the Board page:

- ▶ By-Laws: outline MAMEA mission, organization and governance.
- ▶ Standing Rules: provide more detail on MAMEA operations, Board member duties.
- ▶ Calendar: outlines the timing of MAMEA board and organizational activities, including key State Rep tasks.
- ▶ Minutes: contain important history about MAMEA policy, governance and procedural updates, board responsibilities, MAMEA issues and initiatives, as well as reports from other State Reps. And, the annual membership report (October/Fall) will show you how your state’s membership is changing.
- ▶ Board Member list: identifies your fellow MAMEA Board members, provides their e-mail, phone and other contact information.

## **State Rep Tasks & Responsibilities**

### **●Communicate with your state’s membership.**

The MAMEA membership secretary will give you the latest list of members from your state. Send them an e-mail introducing yourself. Keep in touch with folks regularly, as you gather information for your state report in the Masthead newsletter or announce regional opportunities. Hearing from you is considered a membership benefit!

### **●Update your state’s member information.**

If you receive error messages from member e-mail addresses, try to research the correct information. Try checking their institution’s website to see if they appear on the staff directory. Report your findings to the Membership secretary so that the master mailing/contact list can be updated.

### **●Assist the Membership Secretary in membership retention**

MAMEA membership follows the calendar year. Renewals are due in January. By March, the membership secretary usually generates a list of active MAMEA members from your state (folks who renewed by December), as well as a list of those members who have not yet renewed their membership. You are asked to assist in encouraging “delinquent” members to renew. Contact them via e-mail or surface mail with a note. See the Appendix for an example.

### **●Submit news from your state to The Masthead editor/editorial committee.**

Three to four times a year (winter, spring, summer, fall), you are asked to submit items for the MAMEA newsletter, The Masthead. You can look through the on-line archives of Masthead issues to see the kinds of news items covered in the past.

- Report on MAMEA-related events planned for your state (like a mini-conference).
- Announce workshops, courses and other professional development opportunities that are coming up. To do this, tap your network of school, university, state and federal agency, aquarium/science center contacts, etc. for activities that are relevant & your members will often know of offerings.
- Announce relevant grant opportunities for educators in your state (again, tap your network).
- Report awards and grants that your state’s members may have received – an e-mail to your members is the best way to find out about these!

● Work to ensure that a member from your state is nominated educators for the annual MAMEA awards.

There are 2 awards, one for a classroom teacher, one for an informal educator. Review the criteria and application process on the MAMEA website. Contact your state's members between May and July, the deadline for submission is the end of August of each year. We really need your help with this! And, please check with the MAMEA Secretary to be sure your candidate meets the MAMEA membership requirement. See the criteria at [www.mamea.org/awards.html](http://www.mamea.org/awards.html), applicants need to be members for at least 1 year.

● Encourage your state's members to apply for annual MAMEA grants and scholarships.

Contact your state's members before the end of the school year (May) and/or at the beginning of the school year (August-early September). The submission deadlines are in mid to late-September.

- Each year, there are two grants of up to \$1,000 available for classroom teachers and other educators to fund marine and aquatic educational projects. Review the application criteria at [www.mamea.org/minigrant.html](http://www.mamea.org/minigrant.html), any current member with at least one year's membership may submit one proposal per year.
- Each year, there are four scholarships of up to \$300 available to educators who need some financial assistance in order to attend the Annual Conference. Review the application criteria at [www.mamea.org/mameascholarshipform.pdf](http://www.mamea.org/mameascholarshipform.pdf), any current member with at least 6 months membership is eligible. Applicants may apply for scholarships every other year.

● Attend MAMEA meetings & report to the Board on your state's MAMEA-related activities.

At the October (annual) and March (mid-year) meetings, State Reps report on MAMEA-related and other relevant marine education activities in their state. Reports include: membership recruitment or re-enlistment efforts; mini-conferences (how many participants, how many new members); awards or recognition earned by state members; grants awarded to state members. You can review the on-line Minutes archives to see the kinds of items covered in past reports from State Reps.

● Coordinate/facilitate a mini-conference, preferably once a year. See Appendix II, Guidelines for Mini-Conference Planners

Mini-conferences are professional development opportunities for MAMEA educators. They may cover a topic of particular interest in your region, but MAMEA members from any state are eligible to participate. Mini-conferences also serve as a recruitment tool for MAMEA. Part of the registration fee covers MAMEA membership for any non-members who signup. See the Appendix for original guidelines developed in 1998.

The activity can be a content-rich lecture, demonstration or workshop. Or, it can be a fieldtrip to a marine-related site like an aquarium, science center, research facility, or field site. Some examples are included in the Appendix. Review MAMEA minutes and reports for others. In 2009, a survey of mini-conference attendees in NC, VA and MD resulted in a list of member requests. This list is posted on the MAMEA website at: [www.mamea.org/mins/MemberRequestsMiniConf\\_2009.pdf](http://www.mamea.org/mins/MemberRequestsMiniConf_2009.pdf). A copy is also included in your State Rep Guidebook.

The Mini-Conference program need not be conducted directly by you; you can promote another institution's program or event as the mini-conference -- providing it is of relevant interest and enrichment to MAMEA members.

Some states offer mini-conferences every year, some every other year. States with small memberships (e.g. DC and Delaware) can offer joint events.

Bottom line, you are responsible for: facilitating the mini-conference; promoting the activity to MAMEA members; assuring that MAMEA derives new members and membership fees from the activity; forwarding membership fees and participant information to the MAMEA Membership Secretary.

A mini-conference may be funded in a variety of ways: 1) Entirely funded by the registration fees collected from participants. 2) MAMEA can advance you a small amount of start-up funds to get the mini-conference set-up. Once the event is complete, you return the start-up funds, plus the membership fees earned. 3) In 2009, MAMEA initiated a Mini-Conference Grant program. You may apply for \$300 in grant funding to underwrite speaker fees, food, or materials & supplies that benefit all participants equitably. The 2010 grant application and instructions are in your State Rep Handbook or contact the Past-President.

●President's Discretionary Membership quota:

Each year, the MAMEA President can grant a small number of complementary memberships to individuals who are making a contribution to MAMEA (like a special speaker at your mini-conference, in lieu of honorarium) or an educator who would make a great member, someone you would love to involve in our Association. All State Reps are encouraged to identify these individuals and make a request to the President that a complementary membership be issued. Please provide rationale for your request, a limited number of these memberships are available and they are granted on an individual basis.

●Serve on the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee consists of the state representatives and the immediate Past President. As you communicate with your state's members, ask for help in identifying potential MAMEA board members. The timetable for soliciting and submitting nominations, conferring with nominees and finalizing the names for the annual ballot are outlined in the By-Laws.

●When your term is up and a new State Rep takes over duties, please help your successor by sharing:

Your advice and best practices; most current state member list, contact information and networking suggestions; relevant news; mini-conference successes and pitfalls; etc. If you want to continue your Board experience, you may run for State Rep again, or for another Board office.

## Appendix I: MAMEA Member Renewal Reminder/Prompt

MAMEA membership runs the calendar year, January to December. Most members renew their membership in the fall, when the Annual Conference notice is circulated. The Membership Secretary receives renewals and compares them to existing records of membership. By March, the Secretary issues lists of members who have and have not renewed for each state. The State Reps may be asked to help remind, prompt, encourage delinquent members to renew.

The following letter is an example of a reminder notice:

Dear Marine Educator:

Spring is here and it's time for new beginnings. That includes your membership in the Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association. As your \_\_\_\_\_ State Representative to MAMEA, **I'm writing to encourage you to continue your association with fellow science educators from across the state/region.**

**If you have already responded** to MAMEA Secretary \_\_\_(name)\_\_\_ renewal notice, thank you so much. Watch for the next Masthead issue with news of spring and summer opportunities.

**If you haven't, I'd like to remind you of the many great reasons to belong to MAMEA!**

Your MAMEA membership brings many benefits you may not be aware of, including:

- \*the Masthead newsletter that keeps you up on the latest teaching resources and professional development opportunities in the region;
- \*a MAMEA list-serve that allows you to tap the experience of fellow marine educators from Delaware to North Carolina;
- \*grants for education projects in your classroom or institution;
- \*scholarships for attending MAMEA conferences;
- \*mini-conferences that are affordable and relevant, plus
- \*the Annual Fall MAMEA Conference.

**All that and more for just \$10/year!**

**RENEWING IS EASY**, visit the website and download the renewal form, send it in and you're all set. **JUST \$10/YEAR TO JOIN SOME OF THE REGION'S MOST EXPERIENCED AND CREATIVE MARINE SCIENCE EDUCATORS!** Memberships run from January to December, so don't miss out on benefits by procrastinating... Get the most out of your investment in MAMEA. It's one of the best deals you'll ever find.

Thank you! I look forward to connecting with you soon!

## Appendix II: Mini-Conferences Guidelines & Examples

### Recommended Guidelines for MAMEA Mini-Conference Planners (1988/2007)

The following guidelines were developed at the 1988 MAMEA Conference held at Ashbrook Nature Center in Hockessin, DE. They were updated by the 2007 Board. The guidelines are “recommendations” intended to assist in the mini-conference planning process. Conference planners are free to digress from these guidelines to enhance the success of a MAMEA-sponsored event.

#### **Purpose of the Mini-Conference Program**

The mini-conference program was developed with two major goals in mind:

1. To provide a local, educational opportunity for marine educators.
2. To promote the activities of MAMEA and encourage interested individuals to join our organization. (Typically a registration fee is collected to offset costs of the workshop, and includes a MAMEA membership fee for the year).

#### **Organizing the Conference**

The State Representatives from each member state is responsible for organizing a yearly, MAMEA mini-conference. MAMEA members should be encouraged to assist in the planning. The conference should be scheduled in the Spring to avoid conflicting with MAMEA’s annual Fall conference. In selecting a conference location, keep in mind that one goal of the mini-conference program is to encourage membership growth. A variety of conference formats have been used and proven successful, e.g. a one-day or overnight format.

**Important things to consider:** MAMEA minutes (e.g. 2004 Board Meeting) include discussion of mini-conferences. Attendance ranges from 10 to 50 participants, occasionally a mini-conference has been cancelled due to low enrollment. Time of year seems to be important; need to schedule when teachers aren’t busy with school or away on vacation. Cost may be important: ranges from \$10 to \$75; \$10/person = MAMEA membership; the rest covers fixed costs (food, speakers or admission fees, etc.); teachers will look for value for their dollar. Due to limited number of days that teachers are free, MAMEA workshops may be in competition with other events/workshops offered for teachers. If the conference is on a Saturday, the topic and activities need to be very attractive to teachers.

#### **Announcing/Advertising Your Mini-Conference**

The MAMEA newsletter, *The Masthead*, and the MAMEA website ([www.mamea.org](http://www.mamea.org)) should be utilized to advertise the mini-conference. Contact the Newsletter Editor for the submission schedule; there are typically three to four issues each year, January, April, August and November. Contact the MAMEA Webmaster to post mini-conference announcements on the Conference page of the Website. You can also share your announcement via the MAMEA e-discussion list serve, [mamea@vims.edu](mailto:mamea@vims.edu), but be aware that this list does not include all members. As a Board Member, you will have access to the e-mails for all active MAMEA members, request this from the Membership Secretary.

#### **MAMEA helps you to accomplish your mini-conference goal:**

- ♦ Advertisement space on the MAMEA website and in the Masthead newsletter.
- ♦ The MAMEA Treasurer can assist with the management of money.
- ♦ The Masthead Editor can provide access to recent newsletters for workshop participants.
- ♦ The Past President/Mentorship Chair can provide membership brochures and other MAMEA information for these new participants.
- ♦ Ask the Treasurer for MAMEA logo items that can be offered as “favors” to your workshop participants.

### **How do you pay for your Mini-Conference?**

- 1) Your mini-conference can be self-supporting, with a registration fee that covers your costs and includes \$10/person to cover MAMEA membership.
- 2) MAMEA can offer a start-up loan (\$100) for costs associated with the mini-conference. This should be reimbursed back to MAMEA after the event is completed.
- 3) In 2009, MAMEA initiated a Mini-Conference Grant program. You may apply for \$300 in grant funding to underwrite speaker fees, food, or materials & supplies that benefit all participants equitably. The 2010 grant application and instructions are included in your State Rep Handbook, or contact the Past-President for information.

### **When your Mini-Conference is over...**

- On the completion of your mini-conference, submit the attendee list with contact information (including e-mail address) to the MAMEA Secretary.
- If you have handled the registration fees at your institution, you submit the MAMEA membership fees of \$10/attendee to the Treasurer.
- Please, provide a short write-up about your event for the Masthead Newsletter, and a report for the MAMEA Board Meeting. Include the following information: Date(s), times, title and itinerary of your event. Special speakers or presenters, description of activities. Number of participants, demographic information you can share about them (# of classroom teachers, # of informal educators), and results of any program evaluation you conducted (what participants liked most, suggestions for other events, etc.).

### **Mini-Conference Examples:**

Review the MAMEA meeting minutes and State Rep reports (Board Meetings, October) for more examples. Here are a few longer on the webpage.

#### ***Maryland Mini-Conference and Sleepover 2003***

##### **National Aquarium in Baltimore, March 14-15, 2003; 6:30 p.m.-11:30 a.m.**

The National aquarium in Baltimore and MAMEA are teaming up again this year for the 2003 Maryland mini-conference and teacher sleepover. This year's theme is *Restoring the Chesapeake* Participants will have the opportunity to learn about Chesapeake Bay conservation lessons and activities for classroom and field, grant opportunities to fund restoration projects and visit the Fort McHenry wetland restoration site Saturday morning. View the Aquarium's exhibits after hours, go behind the scenes, see the dolphin show and sleep with the fish and dolphins snoozing close by. Registration fee: \$25 current MAMEA members; \$35 new or renewing MAMEA members (includes 1 year MAMEA membership) and includes program materials, evening snack, and continental breakfast.

#### ***Virginia Mini-Conference 2003***

##### **VIMS, July 9, 2003, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**

This summer, MAMEA, the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Program and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Virginia Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program will host a one-day mini-conference on blue crabs. VIMS crustacean biologists and marine educators will offer information sessions, classroom resources and field and laboratory activities on these important Bay critters. The workshop will be held at VIMS on Wednesday, July 9, 8am – 5 pm and is targeted to middle and high school science teachers. Cost is \$15 and includes program materials, lunch and one year MAMEA membership.

#### ***DC-Delaware Mini-Conference 2004***

Hey, MAMEAans! Save the date for the DC-Delaware Chapters' 2004 Joint Mini-Conference on aquatic education and coastal ecology. When: May 22-23, 2004. Where: Delaware Aquatic Resource Center in Smyrna, DE. What: We plan to provide outdoor experiences that take advantage of the various coastal environments nearby and, if the moon and tides are right, we'll be able to observe the horseshoe crab spawning.

#### ***North Carolina Mini-Conference 2004***

The NC Mini-conference will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at the Fort Fischer NC Aquarium. This sleep over event will include speakers from our state's many educational facilities, demonstrations of classroom and outside activities, nature crafts, food, fun and a chance to mingle with other outstanding educators. The fee is \$35.00 and includes membership to MAMEA and all meals. Folks that have already paid their 2004 membership will receive a discounted fee for the mini-conference. Teacher renewal credit will be offered.