



**Travis Almond,**  
Board President

## President's Welcome

**G**reetings all! I hope 2019 has brought a fantastic beginning for all of you and I wish you continued success throughout the year.

I would like to express what a tremendous honor it is to be the 22<sup>nd</sup> president of the NPEA Board of Directors. I first joined NPEA in 2006, attending the annual conference in Savannah. At that time, I was early in my career as a retirement planner and excited to learn everything related to the wonderful world of pensions. I quickly learned that NPEA is an excellent platform to engage with others in the field, to exchange ideas and share best practices. Regardless of the size of the pension we work for, we all share something in common, we all strive to be better and we have a common goal of enhancing our member education, customer service and communication efforts.

In South Dakota, our slogan is, "Great Faces, Great Places" – one that I associate with NPEA as well. Our conference locations offer spectacular views and display a grandeur that is often difficult to imagine; however, it is the "Great Faces" that I look forward to seeing most. In my 13 years as an NPEA member, I have cultivated relationships that I continue to lean on for ideas and experiences. I have always been amazed at the willingness of fellow members to share not only their successes, but also the lessons learned on their journey to provide a variety of educational platforms to reach out to their membership.

## A Look Back at the 2018 Conference

Our NPEA conference in Tucson offered more than just a beautiful location, which included ample hiking opportunities, a vast amount of desert, and an abundance of cacti (some jumping, from what I was told). The presentations and breakout sessions all delivered practical and meaningful information, which were well received by those who attended. The conference kicked off with our keynote speaker, Aaron Anderson, who taught us how to project our personal presence, and concluded with our closing speaker, Matt Newman, who showed us how to step out of the box by utilizing ways to stay calm amid uncertainty.



The additional presentations and networking opportunities from the 2018 conference highlighted issues and best practices in member education, customer service, cybersecurity, Social Security and national issues we all face today. We all returned home with ideas and information that will help take our systems' programs and services to the next level. If you were unable to attend the conference, the presentations are available on the secure portal of our website, <http://npea.com/members-only>.



NPEA introduced a new conference app in Tucson, which ended up being a big hit with the membership. The mobile app kept conference attendees connected and informed with agendas, speaker information, attendee lists, vendors, a site map and much more. With push notifications, we were able to keep members updated on last-minute changes to the schedule. Members could also take notes during presentations and complete the conference evaluation through the app. The app opened doors for NPEA by eliminating the number of printed items that members needed to carry with them throughout the day. We plan to utilize, and possibly enhance, the app for future conferences.

We said good-bye to our long-time NPEA friend, **Erika Glaster**. Erika had been a member of NPEA since 1987. Her leadership and experience in public pensions were invaluable to the organization and she will be greatly missed. Not only was Erika a familiar and friendly face of NPEA, she taught many of us what it was to be a professional. For me, she had a significant impact in both my personal and professional life and I am sure she did for others as well. We wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors.



We welcomed **Susan Wood**, the director of communications for PSRS/PEERS of Missouri, to the board of directors. Susan has been an active participant and supporter of the NPEA's mission and communication efforts. She has accepted the communications position for the board. We are excited to have Susan on the board of directors and know she will be a valuable team member.



## Winter Board Meeting

The board recently returned from our winter board meeting. We had a heavy agenda and are working diligently on putting together another exciting and impactful agenda for our 2019 conference in Naples. As part of the meeting agenda, the NPEA board officer positions were selected and are as follows: Susan Wood, communications; Barbie Pearson, treasurer; and Ronda Peterson, secretary. We will continue to keep everybody informed regarding this year's conference and other relevant news via our website and other communications. In the meantime, please be sure to watch the video about Naples within this newsletter.

The 2019 NPEA conference will be in Naples, Florida on October 19-23, 2019.

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Our NPEA mission is to provide an opportunity for our membership to build networking relationships and collaborate on a variety of educational platforms so we can improve and adapt to change. The board continues to recognize the challenges we face and the vital role we play in the success of our systems and our members' retirement planning efforts. These continue to be volatile times for pensions, and we will continue providing a platform where we can exchange ideas and programs that will help us to be better equipped to face those challenges head on and assist our members on their retirement journey. I look forward to working with all of you on this quest as we continue to move NPEA forward as a leader in the pension education and communication arena.

I hope all of you are able to join us in Naples for the 2019 conference. I look forward to seeing all of you there!

## 2020 Membership Dues to Increase

Membership in NPEA has many advantages – networking and peer support all year long, thought-provoking speakers at the annual conference, online access to members and industry-related information, and more.

Upon review of various other industry associations, we have discovered that NPEA has one of the lowest, if not the lowest cost for membership dues. We will always strive to keep our dues low, but at the same time want to keep the quality of our offerings high. We have determined that we will be increasing our membership dues to \$750 per system in 2020.

## 2019 Membership Dues

Invoices for 2019 membership dues were mailed to the contact for your system that we have on file. 2019 dues are \$600 for participating systems. All payments due March 31.

If you typically mail a check, please be sure to send it to our new address:

**National Pension Education Association  
c/o Barbie Pearson, Treasurer  
P.O. Box 90063  
Austin, TX 78709**

In addition to our new address, we have changed our banking institution to a more global bank, Wells Fargo. Should you want to wire your dues payment, please contact Barbie Pearson at (512) 542-6731 for details regarding the transaction.

## Join Us in Naples for the 2019 Annual Conference

Click the link below.

[2019 Annual Conference Video](#)



# Stay in Tune to Behavioral Finance with Mike Wilson



Mike Wilson

**B**ehavioral finance (BeFi) is a relatively new field of study that seeks to combine behavioral and cognitive psychological theory with conventional economics and finance to provide explanations for why people make irrational financial decisions. In plainer English, the idea is to understand why we humans make financial decisions that often are not in our best interests (even when we “think” we know better).

As NPEA members, we are right in the thick of helping our members plan for retirement. One of our big challenges: convincing members to save more money now for a retirement that may be decades away. Not surprisingly, there are behavioral finance reasons why people don’t (but sometimes do) save for retirement.

If you want to learn more, I invite you to sign up for a weekly email called the BeFi Weekly Blast. It’s a short email sent once a week with at least one, but perhaps as many as five articles that I’ve run across that week. I include a really short description of the article as well, with the intent to save you some time finding articles of interest. If you’d like to be on the list, just send an email to michael.wilson@urs.org. (If you ever want off the list, just do the same.) We’ve already had a few rounds of discussions amongst a couple of brave subscribers. Please sign up if you think you’d enjoy puzzling over why we do what we do.



## Is Your Information with NPEA Up-To-Date?

Keeping contact information “clean” is an ongoing quest! Please help us out by visiting the Members Only page of our website <http://npea.com/members-only>, to review and update the contact information we have on file for your system. Make any necessary changes and we will update our records. Thanks!

## Pension Administration System Implementation. *We Want to Hear from You!*

**A**re you in the process of implementing a new pension administration system? Have you recently completed an implementation?

From past conferences, we know several systems are currently, or have recently updated or at least enhanced their pension administration systems. We are hoping to share some of those experiences with the NPEA membership. Your story may help someone else with an issue they are not sure how to overcome or it may help avoid some pitfalls.

Please take a few moments to complete the survey below and share your challenges and success when planning and/or implementing a pension administration system.

[Pension Administration System Implementation Survey](#)