

## TMEPA E&O Conference in Franklin a Huge Success

If you missed the Fall E&O Conference in Franklin, you missed a great event. The event was a huge success with over 110 in attendance including 25 exhibitors, up from 85 and 15 respectively in fall 2016. The size of the event creates a favorable environment for networking and engagement. Don Hill, NES VP Operations-Engineering stated, "The TMEPA E&O conference had really good content. I think all members should encourage their engineers to attend as part of their professional development. It is a great event for young engineers to start building their network among peers from across the state."



The event was loaded with great content from start to finish. The keynote speaker, Leslie Marshall, General Mills Corporate Energy Engineer Lead, kicked off the conference describing the many challenges facing manufacturing plants and how utilities can best work with their manufacturing customers as Murfreesboro Electric Department has done locally. Many great topics were addressed including AMI deployment, utilizing drones for inspection, substation preventive maintenance, small cell pole attachments, cyber

security, and updates from TVA on fiber deployment and transmission upgrades. "As a first-time attendee, I was impressed by the wide range of electric utilities in attendance and their engagement in discussing various topics that affect us," said Bob Colwick, Manager, Station Management Services KUB. "It was apparent that TMEPA makes a conscious effort to understand the needs and concerns of electric utility companies."



The conference offered many great networking opportunities as well. "The TMEPA E&O conferences give me a chance to see how others in our industry are handling issues that arise as well as new techniques and products to improve the service to our customers," stated Michael Cain, Electric Project Engineer, Jackson Energy Authority and E & O section chairman. "The relationships developed at the E&O conferences equip me with valuable resources when questions arise about how to handle abnormal situations. The roundtable discussions always provide good feedback from the various members present and allow the participants to discover new ideas and procedures." The reception and round table discussions allowed people to address many concerns with their peers and sponsors. Some stated that this is just as valuable to them as the technical presentations.



TMEPA E&O events also present leadership opportunities, and the event would not be the quality event that it was without the great input of the officers and planning committee. "I would like to personally thank the E&O Officers—Michael Cain, Kenny Longley, and Richard Kelley

along with the Program Committee reps—Chuck Bowlin, Chris Barns, and Ronny Howard,” said Brian Solsbee, TMEPA Executive Director. Cain said he has gained beneficial experience by being involved and stated, “I would encourage everyone to be involved in planning the conference as the planning process usually consists of a 1hr conference call and a few follow-up emails. The officers serve a 1 year rotating term in each position as they move from Secretary Treasurer to Chairman. The officers and program committee always want to incorporate new ideas to make conference informative for all who attend.”



Lastly, the great support of the sponsors helped to make everything possible and created many great networking opportunities. “The events are enriched by the quality sponsors who continue to support TMEPA,” expressed Solsbee. “Their expertise and products help members keep the lights on. It’s great to know who to call on when you need material or a consultant.” Toby Smith, at Sensus said “Time is so important these days, the TMEPA E&O maximized time management by intertwining presentations by innovating subject matter experts with all important vendor face-time events. Sensus is honored to be a proud associate of TMEPA.” If you missed this one, please plan to attend the Spring E&O Conference in April. The details will be distributed as soon as they are finalized. If you are not currently on the E&O distribution list and would like to be added, please let Susan Sherrill ([susans@tmepa.org](mailto:susans@tmepa.org)) know.