

Patricia Rondeau  
NEMCSA Board Member



In 2015 Patricia Rondeau was asked to represent the Volunteer Advisory Board on the NEMCSA Board of Directors to replace long standing member, Jean Kroll. "I was honored," said Pat.

Most of Pat's working career has been in Human Service, and she said that NEMCSA has always been in the lead with securing grants that benefit the residents of our communities. "This position seemed to fit into my career interests."

At every Board meeting Pat became more impressed with the staff and the impact NEMCSA makes on our communities but when the girls spoke on Head Start and showed the video on identifying abuse and neglect that they experience on a daily basis with their intervention with families, she said she was moved to tears.

Ms. Rondeau was asked, "What does treating participants with dignity and respect mean to you as a NEMCSA Board member?" She replied, "All of us want respect and to be treated with dignity, but I have experienced the degrading way low income participants are treated. Poverty does not deserve any less understanding and respect than someone that has never experienced the other side of life. NEMCSA programs all help people to change their "lot in life". This is always done with dignity and respect. This is the foundation for the participants to make something with their lives, and then go on to help someone else or 'Pay it forward'."

Pat is the Vice President on the NEMCSA Board and has served for 25 years on the Senior Companion Advisory Board.

Ms. Rondeau was born in Flint, Michigan on August 24, 1943. In 1946 her family moved to Alpena. "I consider myself a rooted Alpena Citizen." Her two sons, Duane and Edward, both live in Alpena with their families. She considers herself lucky to have her family close to her at all times.

Pat began her nursing career in 1974 when she became a student in the first LPN class held at Alpena Community College. After graduation she worked for Alpena General Hospital in the Emergency Room. After two years of working nights, weekends and holidays, Pat took a position with James E. Spens, MD as office manager and nurse. In 1985 she began working as a Public Health Nurse for District Health Department # 4. That same year, while still working full time, she began taking night classes to earn a degree in Registered Nursing. In 1987 she received her degree and was the recipient of the Anna M. Besser Award. She returned to work the next day as an RN rather than an LPN.

In 1990 Ms. Rondeau became the DHD#4 Public Health Supervisor. Pat's boss supported her to pursue starting the first Adult Day Care Center in Alpena. In 1991 "The Caring Place" was born and is still in existence today. During this time Pat wrote a grant to the University of Michigan for the "alzheimer's association<sup>®</sup> - Train the Trainer" program and completed the curriculum to train direct care staff in a wide array of care settings in northeast Michigan. Pat is still a member of the Michigan Education and Dementia Network and continues to train professionals and caregivers.

The Health Department was the recipient of the Women's Cancer Screening Program and Pat worked with Alpena Regional Medical Center and the physicians of our counties on this project. She said that this was a huge and needed program that provided free breast screening and free mammograms for women 40+ without insurance. "I managed 21 programs and the most wonderful staff a manager could ask for," Pat said.

In 2006 Ms. Rondeau retired from the Health Department to help care for her mother. She quickly found that she was not made to stay at home and missed the interaction with people on a daily basis. She applied to Probate Court for the position of Guardian ad litem for Alpena County and still holds that position today.

"Throughout my career NEMCSA has always been a part of every job I did. The NEMCSA faculty [sic] has not only been my colleagues, but my friends. I wish to thank the staff and my fellow board members for the support and friendship they have extended to me".