



Bailus Walker, Jr., Ph.D., MPH

The National Environmental Health Association Dr. Bailus Walker, Jr. Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Award

Dr. Bailus Walker, Jr. had a long career as a researcher, faculty, and administrator in Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health. Dr. Walker was a Professor of Environmental and Occupational Medicine and Toxicology in the College of Medicine, Department of Community and Family Medicine at the historically black university, Howard University in Washington D.C. He was a consultant to Public Health programs seeking accreditation. He wrote prolifically in the field of Public and Environmental and Occupational Health. He was a long-time member and supporter of NEHA. Many of his students, leaders, employees, mentees, speak highly of his teaching, consulting, and the examples he set for us. He worked in several states, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Alabama, New York, California, and Washington, D.C., touching many Schools of Public Health during his career.

He wrote and spoke on public health, toxicology, and diversity in the field of Environmental Health. His awards for his works are many, including being the recipient of the NEHA Walter S. Mangold Award in 1984. He chaired a Congressional CSPAN Meeting on Environmental Racism in 1993 that pulled in several experts on the topic, exposing the harm to communities of color. Dr. Walker headed various state and federal government working groups, committees, and task forces. He was a past president of the American Public Health Association (APHA). Dr. Bailus Walker is a “true public health champion”, stated the APHA Executive Director, Dr. Georges C. Benjamin. It is a fitting honor for NEHA as an organization to recognize Dr. Walker with the naming of the new Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Award after him. Long may he be remembered for his works in diversity and Environmental Health through this award.

Why Diversity?

NEHA is united in promoting a wholesome environment for all. Organizations around the country are increasing diversity awareness and NEHA is no exception. Each NEHA member and employee are important, and we will work better towards common goals if we are diverse and inclusive. Organizations progress if there is diversity, inclusiveness, and equality. The incidents in 2020 of conflicts in society with police brutality have prompted reactions from many individuals and organizations. As the “Black Lives Matter” and “Me Too” Movements unfold

around the country, NEHA leaders are taking a stand to denounce racism and to promote diversity. Dr. Bailus Walker, Jr. was a role model and a proponent of diversity throughout his career.

Activities supporting diversity and environmental stewardship

Key tenets of the Dr. Bailus Walker, Jr. Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Award are the applicant's ability to demonstrate support for programs or activities that benefit diverse communities and a commitment to environmental stewardship.

Examples of activities that may support diverse populations include: Asian Pacific Islander program, Black Employment program, Hispanic Employment program, support for people with disabilities or persons with chronic diseases and special health care needs, women's issues, older workers inclusion, American Indian inclusion, LGBTQIA recognition, or Veterans programs.

Examples of activities that may support environmental stewardship include: managing site clean-ups at facilities located in diverse communities, conducting inspections of facilities in diverse communities, taking enforcement/compliance actions on violating/polluting facilities in diverse communities, and showing added commitment to issues around Environmental Justice: climate change and environmental/social awareness injustices, healthy homes, indoor/outdoor air quality, eliminating food deserts, ensuring access safe drinking water, and natural disasters impact on diverse communities.

Recognition of award winners

The award will be presented to the awardee as a special plaque and will be promoted through emails, social media, and on the NEHA website each year. A list of award recipients will be summarized each year in writing in the *Journal of Environmental Health*. A list of current and previous winners will be placed on a special summary plaque in the NEHA office lobby.

