

# NEHA 2016 AEC WRAP-UP

## The State of Big Ideas

Laura Brister  
Kristen Ruby-Cisneros  
Clare Sinacori  
National Environmental  
Health Association

### SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS!

They say everything is bigger in Texas and this year, NEHA's 80th Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition was no exception with the partnership between our AEC and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Healthy Homes Conference. Our two conferences joined forces in San Antonio from June 13–16, 2016.

Not only was our partnership with HUD new to our programming this year, we also redesigned the layout of our annual event. We departed from our usual conference schedule and started the AEC on Monday afternoon with the Opening Session & Keynote. Immediately following this event was the always popular Exhibition Grand Opening & Party. We also made changes to the Exhibition, which opened the first night of the conference and stayed open all day on the next, and the Awards Presentation, which was a stand-alone event this year (and only one hour long!). Another major change this year was adding the Texas Social in lieu of the Presidents Banquet. Instead of ending the conference in the evening at the Presidents Banquet, it ended with a plenary closing session at 1 p.m. on Thursday to allow for travel that afternoon.

What did not change, however, was the vast array of educational sessions, meaningful networking opportunities, and amazing camaradery among all in attendance.

With the introduction of all these new facets to the AEC, we knew it was going to be a big year. And with over 1,300 attendees, our predictions were not wrong!

Momentum is on our side and we've already started planning for the 2017 AEC taking place in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Turn to page 69 for information about the 2017 AEC and the Call for Abstracts.



NEHA 2016 AEC and  
HUD Healthy Homes Conference  
SAN ANTONIO, TX ★ JUNE 13-16, 2016



PRESENTED BY  
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative\*



NEHA 2016 AEC photos courtesy of Liz Warburton, Eversnap Photography.

## OPENING SESSION & KEYNOTE

### HUD Secretary Julian Castro Kicks Off AEC



The conference started on Monday, June 13 in the late afternoon with the Opening Session & Keynote. We were honored to have HUD Secretary Julian Castro as our keynote speaker, who is also a former mayor of San Antonio. Secretary Castro's moving presentation discussed the importance of smoke-free environments in public housing, along with other crucial legislature and how necessary that is for our children's health and safety. On behalf of NEHA and HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes, we thank Secretary Castro for joining us and sharing his passion with our attendees. His presentation was a great start to a very exciting week ahead.

### Panel Discussions at the Opening Session

The keynote was followed by two panel discussions moderated by Eric Pooley, senior vice president for strategy and communications with the Environmental Defense Fund. The first panel featured Dr. Patrick Breyse, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) National Center for Environmental Health(NCEH)/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR); Dr. Umair Shah, executive director and local health authority for Harris County, Texas; and Michelle Miller, acting director for HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes.

The second panel had Dr. Alexandra Bambas Nolen, vice president for impact at Episcopal Health Foundation; Mary Ellen Burns, senior vice president of grants implementation for the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County; Christopher Ptomey, senior director of government relations for Habitat for Humanity International's Office of Government Relations and Advocacy; and Joanne Zurcher, government affairs director at NEHA. Both panels discussed the challenges facing the field of environmental health while looking toward the future and focusing on how we can all work together to make our environment safer.



*NEHA's Dr. David Dyjack addresses a packed room at the Opening Session & Keynote.*



*The participants in the first panel discussed environmental health challenges and trends that they face in their respective positions.*



*The second panel of the Opening Session explored how collaborative efforts can further the work we do in environmental health.*



*The color guard from Fort Sam Houston opened up the AEC with a moving display of our national flag and an amazing live singing of the national anthem.*

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

With environmental health in the news so often the past year, the AEC made sure to feature sessions on cutting edge topics such as the Zika virus, Flint and its lead-water crisis, and the San Bernardino terrorist attack that shook an entire environmental health department.

The session, “Flint Water Crisis: A Firsthand Account of the Principles by the Principals,” examined the events that lead to the tragic exposure of Flint’s residents to lead through the public drinking water system. Lessons learned were shared by Dr. Marc Edwards, the Virginia Tech researcher who broke the lead-in-water story, and Mark Valacak, health officer for the Genesee County Health Department. Over 250 attendees were present to hear these two eyewitness accounts of this controversial event.

To speak on the topic of Zika, Dr. Claudia Riegel, director for the City of New Orleans Mosquito & Termite Control Board, joined us in San Antonio for a 90-minute presentation that discussed the partner agency framework the City of New Orleans has created to enhance its ability to conduct mosquito control and maximize efficiency, and how they utilize their integrated pest management approach while including community involvement.

The Climate Change track saw an exciting year with the addition of a panel presentation that included Diane Raynes, assistant director, and Tricia Roy, senior analyst, from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (U.S. GAO); Dr. Edward Maibach, director for the Center for Climate Change Communication at George Mason University; and Dr. George Luber, chief of CDC’s Climate and Health Program. The panel discussed communication and climate change stemming from the findings of the U.S. GAO report on the risks climate change poses to public health and how to best address these risks and communicate them effectively.

From feng shui to contemporary challenges for women in the workplace and healthy homes to informatics, the educational programming this year was top notch. Thanks to all our presenters who made such a memorable impression by sharing your ideas, research, and technology with attendees.



*Dr. Marc Edwards (left) and Mark Valacak (right) provided insight into the events leading up to the Flint water crisis, moderated by Andrew Roszak (middle).*



*A panel packed full of experts enlightened audience members on the importance of communication regarding climate change and public health.*

### Closing Session

Another addition this year with our new conference format was a closing session to wrap-up the conference and be able to send off attendees together. Environmental health professionals often put themselves in harm’s way to make sure others are safe and lessons are learned moving forward, so the closing session was dedicated to the neglected subject of mental healthcare. The closing session, “From Sandy to San Bernardino: Risk, Response & Resiliency,” brought together a panel of leading experts in the field of mental health and crisis response. Dr. April Naturale, senior technical specialist at ICF International, moderated this emotional session that took attendees through different crisis events that environmental health professionals have faced—Ebola, Flint, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and most recently, what our environmental health family in San Bernardino went through this past December—and discussed how we can be better prepared. The closing session panelists included Donna Knuston, public health analyst at CDC/NCEH; Max Kiefer, interim director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Western States Division; and Joshua Dugas, chief for the Division of Environmental Health Services for San Bernardino County. We would like to thank all panelists for their bravery in speaking openly and honestly to attendees.

With a standing ovation for Joshua Dugas on our closing panel and for all of San Bernardino, we wrapped this year’s AEC. We want to thank those who joined us in San Antonio, Texas, and for your support of NEHA, HUD, and environmental health. We hope to see you in 2017!



*Our closing panelists shared personal experiences in the aftermath of a crisis and the lessons they learned.*



*Marlene Gaither talks about a recent tick investigation her health department conducted that was featured in a recent issue of the Journal.*



*An attendee scores Connect4 NEHA points prior to attending an educational session.*

## 2016 AEC Session Tracks

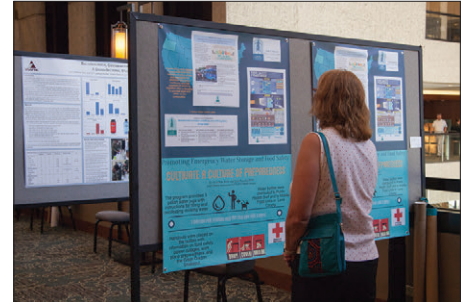
This year's educational program featured over 200 sessions and 40 poster presentations. The addition of HUD's Healthy Homes Conference added 60 sessions that focused on healthy homes and communities. Attendees were able to take full advantage of such diverse sessions spanning over 20 different tracks.

- Air Quality
- Children's Environmental Health
- Climate Change
- Emergency Preparedness & Response
- Emerging Environmental Health Issues
- Environmental Health Impact Assessment
- Environmental Health Tracking & Informatics
- Food Safety & Defense
- General Environmental Health
- Healthy Homes and Communities
- Leadership/Management
- Onsite Wastewater
- Pathogens & Outbreaks
- Recreational Waters
- Schools/Institutions
- Student Research Presentations
- Sustainability
- Technology and Environmental Health
- Uniformed Services
- Vector Control & Zoonotic Diseases
- Water Quality

“What a great place and opportunity to meet with your fellow environmental health specialists to collaborate, learn, and work together to provide a stronger professional foundation to share within your communities across the country.” – AEC attendee



With so many educational sessions to choose from, attendees relied on the meeting app and each other to figure out which ones to attend.



With over 40 posters and two separate poster sessions, attendees were exposed to a variety of environmental health topics.



Packed sessions rooms were seen throughout the AEC.



Interactive elements in the educational sessions pulled attendees from their seats.

## Recorded Sessions



If you were unable to attend the AEC or if you did attend but weren't able to sit in on a session that piqued your interest, we've got you covered! You can access more than 30 educational sessions that were recorded at the AEC. This is a free benefit for those who attended the conference. For those unable to attend the conference, these sessions can be purchased for \$149/members or \$249/nonmembers. This online archive of sessions enables you to view sessions on demand at your convenience; access speaker presentations, handouts, and other materials; and earn 20–30 NEHA continuing education hours. Details on the recorded session can be found at [www.neha.org/aec/recorded-sessions](http://www.neha.org/aec/recorded-sessions).

## MEETING APP

This year NEHA decided to go green with a much smaller conference program guide and a greater reliance on our conference meeting app. Of course, our wonderful attendees stepped right up to the plate and embraced the opportunity to go digital! More than 1,000 attendees used the app to view sessions, manage their schedule, use the local guide maps to see the surrounding area and navigate between hotels, make connections with other attendees, and of course, play the Connect4 NEHA game to earn points.

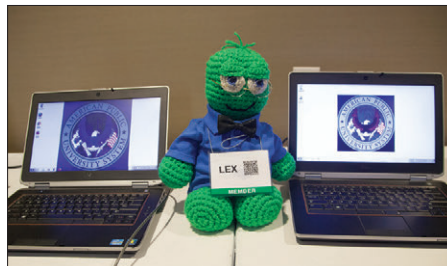
The use of the app allowed attendees to scan each other's name badges as a way to network, which allowed them the opportunity to set up meetings and send messages back and forth. Attendees started earning points as soon as they checked in and could earn points for scanning name badges, attending sessions and special events, visiting exhibitors and sponsors, and new this year, locating our new NEHA mascot, Lex, and scanning his name badge for points! Thanks to all attendees for trying something new and as always, for your participation in Connect4 NEHA. Congratulations to our winners this year!

The 2016 AEC app winners were:

- \$100 Visa gift card for Master of the AEC Universe (most overall most points): Kedesch Altidor-Dorcely
- \$100 Visa gift card for AEC Master (1,500+ points): Carolyn Watson
- \$50 Visa gift card for AEC Leader (751–1,500 points): Charles Tate
- \$25 Visa gift card for AEC Champion (500–750 points): Mary Alice Peterson



*The meeting app was a must in order to navigate the conference and we made sure help was on hand if attendees had questions.*



*Meet Lex—NEHA's mascot whose name badge could be scanned by attendees for extra points in the Connect4 NEHA game.*



*Seeing double? NEHA President Bob Custard looks on as he's featured on NEHA TV.*

## #nehaaec Twitter Posts



**Sheila D. Pressley @sdpressley**

@DTDyjack It was a great session! As you said, we need additional time for #nehaaec 2017!! See you Grand Rapids!!

**Monona County Envi @MononaCoEnviron**

Healthy Homes sessions have been awesome #nehaaec #SanAntonio

**Cathy Blume @CathyBlume**

So much information today! I am new to healthy homes but so interesting #nehaaec

**Dr. Umair A. Shah @ushahmd**

Shout out to @hcphtx #staff just after the @nehaorg @HUDgov keynote #nehaaec today / thank you!! #health

**Victoria Griffith @foodsafetyqueen**

Have always learned so much from @Maricopahealth #activemanagement #nehaaec

**K. Altidor @qkay**

Bridging Environmental Health Gaps such an excellent session. Dr. Cecil is speaking the truth! #nehaaec

**Bryan Brooks @BryanWBrooks**

Great first panel discussion moderated by @EricPooley @CDCgov @HUDgov @nehaorg #nehaaec #NHHM2016

**Michele Samarya-Timm @MicheleSamaryaT**

#nehaaec San Bernardino silver lining: meeting and receiving help from amazing EH professionals from all over

## NEHA TV

We partnered with WebsEdge, an international film and broadcasting company, to bring NEHA TV to the 2016 AEC. NEHA TV was an on-site conference television channel featuring a new episode daily that was screened around the venue, as well as on a dedicated television channel in select guest hotel rooms and online.

Each daily program had two features:

- Thought Leadership: 5-minute sponsored film segments highlighting cutting edge programs, industry leaders, case studies, and best practices in environmental health.
- Conference News: A daily program of conference highlights featuring “behind the scenes” interviews, coverage of conference events, and reactions to the day from attendees.

Some exclusive features, which include interviews with CDC's Dr. George Luber, Zika expert Dr. Claudia Riegel, and HUD's Michelle Miller, can be view at [www.neha.org/aec/neha-tv](http://www.neha.org/aec/neha-tv).

## AMAZING EVENTS AT THE AEC

The annual UL Event once again sold out a month leading up to the event and it's no surprise with the creative ways attendees are able to see our host city through this event. This year's event was no exception with a boat ride along the San Antonio River on Tuesday evening that ended at the historic Pearl Brewery District. Guests were then able to socialize and dine on some delicious food before the night ended with bus rides back to the conference hotels. We heartily thank UL for continuing to entertain and excite our attendees through their sponsorship of this special event.

Over 700 attendees joined us for a Texas barbeque and live country western music on Wednesday evening at our Texas Social. The event was held at La Villita Historic Arts Village along the banks of the San Antonio River. Cold drinks helped beat the heat as attendees enjoyed networking, catching up with friends and colleagues, and line dancing during the event. Thanks to the Bret Mullins Band who entertained attendees throughout the event and to our attendees for showing up in smiles and cowboy boots!

Other events such as the Exhibition Grand Opening & Party and the Awards Presentation brought attendees together and were hugely successful. Planned and impromptu, there were numerous meetings, dinners, and happy hours where attendees shared insights and knowledge, and were able to just kick back and enjoy the company of each other.



*UL Event attendees enjoyed a leisurely boat ride down the San Antonio River, getting to see many unique elements of the Riverwalk.*



*After disembarking the boats, UL Event attendees made their way to the Pearl Brewery District for dinner and socializing.*



*Texas Social attendees were able to network and catch up on the week's events in a beautiful setting accompanied by barbeque and drinks.*



*NEHA's leadership takes their lovely wives for a spin on the dance floor.*



*What would a Texas barbeque be like without some toe-tapping country western music? The Bret Mullins Band rocked the event with their repertoire of classic and current hits.*

### Sponsors, Partners, and Contributors

We appreciate all of the following organizations that made this conference possible!

#### Diamond Sponsors

Green & Healthy Homes Initiative  
Healthy Housing Solutions, Inc.  
National Center for Healthy Housing  
UL

#### Platinum Sponsors

Accela  
American Public University

#### Gold Sponsors

Digital Health Department, Inc.  
National Restaurant Association  
Prometric  
Skillsoft Corporation

#### Silver Sponsors

Orkin  
Xtivia

#### Bronze Sponsors

Sweeps Software, Inc.  
Presby Environmental, Inc.

#### Special Thanks to

Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs  
Association of Pool and Spa Professionals  
CDC/NCEH  
FDA  
NEHA's Technical Advisors  
Uniformed Services Environmental Health Association  
USDA Food and Nutrition Service  
U.S. EPA  
U.S. Government Accountability Office

## EXHIBITION

The Exhibition opened on the first evening of the conference with the Grand Opening & Party, an event that is always a favorite for attendees. The event provides the opportunity to network with exhibitors, sponsors, and other attendees. Food stations and cash bars were set up throughout the exhibit hall on the opening night. NEHA's booth added some fun and innovative elements with an Instagram picture station with props.

Our exhibit hours were extended this year and midmorning and midafternoon coffee breaks were brought in to the exhibit hall so attendees and exhibitors could network while taking a break from educational sessions. Our partnership with HUD's Healthy Homes Conference brought in more exhibitors and new faces to the event. Thank you to all of our exhibitors for joining us this year in San Antonio. We appreciate the value you add for our attendees and our conference, and look forward to seeing you at the 2017 AEC in Grand Rapids, Michigan!



## 2016 AEC Exhibitors

- Accela
- Advanced Business Software, LLC
- Air Chek, Inc.
- American Academy of Sanitarians
- American Chemistry Council
- American Public Health Association
- American Public University
- American Society of Home Inspectors
- Anua
- Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs
- Association of Professional Piercers
- Association of Public Health Laboratories
- Bitwise Industries
- Building Performance Institute, Inc.
- CDC Health Communication Specialists
- ORISE Fellow
- CDC NCEH/ATSDR
- Citizens for Radioactive Radon Reduction
- Custom Data Processing, Inc.
- Digital Health Department, Inc.
- ECOBOND LBP, LLC
- Eljen Corporation
- Environmental Hazards Services, LLC
- Environmental Information Association
- Experience Grand Rapids
- FDA/CFSAN
- GL Solutions
- GLO GERM
- Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
- HealthSpace USA Inc
- Healthy Housing Solutions, Inc.
- Hedgerow Software Ltd.
- Heuresis Corporation
- Hoot Systems
- HUD
- Industrial Test Systems, Inc.
- International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials R&T
- International Food Protection Training Institute
- INGO, LLC
- Inspect2GO Health Inspection Software
- ITW Pro Brands
- Keys to a Healthy Home
- Marcor Development Corp/Azelis Americas
- McCall & Spero Environmental, Inc.
- Medical Education Training Campus
- Micro Essential Lab
- Mitchell Humphrey
- MSU Online MS in Food Safety Program
- Mycometer
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Board of Public Health Examiners
- National Center for Biomedical Research and Training
- National Center for Healthy Housing
- National Environmental Health Association
- National Library of Medicine
- National Restaurant Association
- National Swimming Pool Foundation
- Northeastern Integrated Pest Management
- NSF International
- Ozark River Hygienic Hand-Wash Station
- Polylok, Inc.
- Presby Environmental, Inc.
- Prometric
- Protec Instrument Corporation
- QuantEM Food Safety Laboratories
- San Jamar
- Shat-R-Shield, Inc.
- Skillsoft Corporation
- StateFoodSafety.com
- Sweeps Software, Inc.
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas Environmental Health Association
- ThermoWorks
- Underwriters Laboratories
- The University of Findlay
- USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service
- U.S. EPA Indoor Environments Division
- U.S. Fire Administration
- WareSys
- Williams Comfort Products
- Zonolite Attic Insulation Trust



Check out more photos from the 2016 AEC on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/NEHA.org](http://www.facebook.com/NEHA.org)!

## Walter F. Snyder Environmental Health Award

### Stephen R. Tackitt, MPH, RS, DAAS

NSF International and NEHA presented this distinguished award to Stephen Tackitt. The Snyder Award, given in honor of NSF International's cofounder and first executive director Walter F. Snyder, is presented annually in recognition of outstanding contributions to the advancement of environmental health. Tackitt was honored for more than 40 years of significant and lasting contributions to environmental and public health through leadership, education, public service, and work on consensus national standards.

"Steve Tackitt's accomplishments reflect the principles expressed by Walter F. Snyder and the public health mission of NSF International," said NSF International President and CEO Kevan P. Lawlor. "His extensive experience and knowledge of environmental health



*Stephen Tackitt graciously accepts the 2016 Snyder Award with words of wisdom and much appreciation.*

and his commitment to education demonstrate a strong dedication to the promotion of

public health. As chair of several NSF/ANSI standards committees, his collaboration and interpersonal skills were instrumental in successfully advancing standards development through the consensus process."

"Steve's innovative and collaborative leadership style, including his NEHA leadership role, establish him as a highly regarded and respected leader in the environmental health community. His commitment to the profession is a model for future leaders in public health, and his enthusiasm and ability to build consensus attest to an exceptional, memorable and rewarding career," said NEHA Executive Director Dr. David Dyjack.

To read more about Tackitt's career, please visit <http://www.nsf.org/newsroom/stephen-r-tackitt-earns-walter-f-snyder-environmental-health-award-from-n>.

## AWARDS & HONORS

Numerous notable individuals and organizations were recognized at the AEC. For more information about each award, please go to [www.neha.org/about-neha/awards](http://www.neha.org/about-neha/awards).

### **AAS Davis Calvin Wagner Sanitarian Award**

CAPT Wendy Fanaselle

### **Accela/NEHA 2016 AEC Scholarships**

Valerie Cohen  
Peter Cooley  
Becky Elias  
Kathryn Garcia  
Nancy-Ann Hall  
Carly Hegarty  
Christy Klaus  
Iris Lang  
Shannon McKeon  
Mary Alice Peterson  
Therese Pilonetti  
Karen Solberg  
April Torham  
JoAnn Xiong-Mercado  
Lydia Zweimiller

### **AEHAP/NCEH Student Research Competition Winners**

Scott Biebas, Baylor University  
Ethan Fuhrman, University of Wisconsin Eau Claire  
Marissa Taylor, Western Carolina University  
Joshua Volkan, East Carolina University

### **Dr. R. Neil Lowry Grant**

Riverside County Department of Environmental Health

### **Excellence in Sustainability Award**

City of Plano, Environmental Health & Sustainability Department

### **HUD Secretary's Award for Healthy Homes**

*Healthy Homes Innovation and Achievement in Cross Sector Coordination Among Health, Environment, and Housing*  
Yesler Terrace Breathe Easy Program (Seattle, WA)  
*Healthy Homes Innovation and Achievement in Public Policy*  
Regional Asthma Management Program (Oakland, CA)

*Healthy Homes Innovation and Achievement in Public Housing/Multifamily Supported Housing*  
Boston Residential Investigation on Green and Healthy Transitions (BRIGHT)

### **Innovating for Environmental Health App Challenge**

Biky, created by Nicolas Leon, Diana Hurtado, and Angela Jimenez

### **NEHA 2016 Presidential Citations**

#### *Transition Period Leadership*

Alicia Collins  
Brian Collins  
Carolyn Harvey  
Mel Knight  
Keith Krinn

#### *Endowment Fund Leadership*

Welford Roberts

#### *Support for Environmental Health Students*

Sandra Long  
James Speckhart

#### *My Wingman*

Vince Radke

#### *Finance Committee Leadership*

Adam London

#### *Affiliate Engagement Committee Leadership*

Lynne Madison

#### *AEC Committee Leadership*

Laura Brister  
Roy Kroeger

#### *Journal Column Help*

Kristen Ruby-Cisneros

#### *Board Support*

Faye Koeltzow

#### *Visionary Leadership*

David Dyjack

### **NEHA/AAS/APU Scholarships**

#### *Undergraduate*

Maryann Cowart, University of Wisconsin Eau Claire  
Morgan Lawson, Western Carolina University  
Molly Smith, University of Georgia

#### *Graduate*

Naomi Carlson, Kent State University

### **NEHA Affiliate Certificates of Merit**

#### *Individuals*

Barry Ambrose (AL)  
Katie Bante (AK)  
Sandy Collins (MA)  
Kathy King (NE)  
Candice Levenberry (Nat'l Capitol Area)  
Ronald David Lund (UT)  
Jason Ravenscroft (IN)  
Shannon Rohr (MN)  
Michelle Clausen Rosendahl (IA)  
Traci Slowinski (TX and Business & Industry)  
Jessica Voglewede (MI)

#### *Team*

AL—The Daniel Foundation  
FL—Host affiliate team for the NEHA 2015 AEC (Team members: Tricia Dall, Michael Crea, andCarolynn Balcar)  
MA—Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts Inspector Training, Food Certificate Program  
MD, Nat'l Capitol Area, & VA—DC Department of Health, Food Safety and Hygiene Inspection Services Division

### **NEHA Outgoing Regional Vice-President Award**

Edward Briggs  
Keith Johnson

### **NEHA Outgoing President Award**

Bob Custard

### **NEHA Past Presidents Award**

Stan Hazan  
David Ludwig

### **NSF International Scholarship Program Winner**

Melanie Keil, Colorado State University

### **Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award**

Food, Lodging, and Institution Section, Wake County Environmental Services