

NEHA 2022 AEC

Wrap-Up



Safeguarding a Road Less Traveled

The National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) 85th Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition highlighted our commitment to quality, timely, and innovative education with a new hybrid format. With the large variance in travel restrictions in place around the country and globe—coupled with the demand for in-person opportunities to network and engage—the 2022 AEC offered both in-person and virtual options. The 2022 AEC took place June 28–July 1 in beautiful Spokane, Washington, and virtually. A total of 1,400 environmental health professionals participated in AEC, with 1,000 people gathering in Spokane and 400 people engaging virtually. Attendees shared experiences, research, expertise, and best practices to reconnect and safeguard our communities in a postpandemic world.

A highly engaging keynote address was delivered by Dr. Umair Shah, MPH, MD, secretary of health for the Washington State Board of Health. Speaking to in-person and virtual attendees, he discussed the visibility crisis of environmental health that has been thrust to the forefront of public health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Shah also emphasized the greatest issues facing environmental health professionals including climate change, emergency preparedness, and vectors. He closed out the session by stressing the importance of focusing on transformational health compared to transactional health as we look to the future.

On the second day, the Grand Session Kickoff featured a moderated panel of environmental health leaders to discuss the challenges and difficult situations environmental health workers faced during the implementation of COVID-19 safety measures. NEHA President Roy Kroeger moderated the highly



engaging conversation that highlighted the use of education versus enforcement, as well as the importance of mental health. Panelists included Eric Bradley, deputy health director of Linn County Public Health; Tom Gonzales, public health director of the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment; and Niki Lemin, assistant health commissioner and director of environmental health for Franklin County Public Health.

The AEC featured multiple days of educational content on a variety of topics including food safety, water quality, climate and health, emergency preparedness, and much more. William (Bill) Marler, JD, attorney and food safety expert from Marler Clark, The

Seth Arends
Kristie Denbrock
Soni Fink
Heather Folker
Angelica Ledezma
Kristen Ruby-Cisneros
Jordan Strahle
National Environmental Health Association

Food Safety Law Firm, closed out the AEC by speaking virtually to attendees about a lawyer's view of modern foodborne outbreaks.

Nearly 250 educational sessions, pre-conference workshops, and meetings were held at the 2022 AEC. Of these events, 90 were available to the virtual audience. Approximately 300 speakers shared their expertise to full rooms and virtual attendees throughout the conference. The Exhibit Hall was filled with exhibitors from various industries to showcase their innovative products and services designed to improve the job functions and performance of environmental health professionals.

With the lack of in-person networking opportunities over the last couple of years, the Reconnecting on the River Networking Event proved to be an important aspect of the 2022 AEC. The event brought together 700 attendees who were able to relax and reconnect with their peers along the banks of the beautiful Spokane River.

NEHA thanks our attendees, members, board, technical advisors, presenters, exhibitors, sponsors, and staff who participated and contributed to the success of the 2022 AEC. We know the past couple of years have been especially challenging and we thank everyone who took the time to attend and participate in the 2022 AEC. We hope to see you next year in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the 2023 AEC. Check out the promotion for the 2023 AEC on page 47.

NEHA 2022 AEC photos courtesy of Shanoah Eck, Shanoah Bri Photography, <https://shanoahbriphotography.com>.

Featured Speakers



Keynote speaker Dr. Umair Shah emphasized the importance of us coming together to keep people and communities safe and healthy.

Keynote Address

NEHA President Roy Kroeger opened the 2022 AEC on June 28. After welcoming attendees to beautiful Spokane, he introduced Carol Evans, chairperson of the Spokane Tribal Council. Evans delivered a meaningful invocation and started it by saying, “For myself and my people, we always acknowledge our creator. Thank you, creator, for this beautiful day. We thank you for all of the gifts you provide for us—for the air, water, land, animals, and the people.” She spoke of the importance of the history of the land and its connection to the Spokane people. Evans closed by delivering a land acknowledgement—a statement that recognizes, respects, and affirms the ongoing relationship between Indigenous people and the land—by stating, “For my people, this land that you sit on today is the historical home of the Spokane people since time immemorial.”

The Keynote Address was presented by Dr. Umair Shah, MPH, MD. He was appointed secretary of health for the Washington State Board of Health by Governor Jay Inslee in December 2020. Prior to this role, Dr. Shah served as executive director and local health authority for Harris County Public Health in Texas—a nationally-accredited public health agency for the nation’s 3rd largest county with 4.7 million people. Over his career, Dr. Shah has been a clinician, innovator, educator, and leader in health.

Dr. Shah began his address by saying, “It’s not words on paper but action as we must all come together.” His presentation—Health Where Equity, Innovation, and Engagement Meet—set the stage for the 45-minute address.

Dr. Shah continued by emphasizing, “It’s what we do as a society collectively, as people, to be safe, healthy, and protected. If we do well, we get healthy people that create healthy communities.” He added that “public health is inherently political” and creates an “invisibility crisis” for the environmental and public health workforce. He listed the three V’s of this crisis: visibility, value, and validation. He likened the workforce as the “offensive line of a football team,” not being seen but their impact crucial and needed.

Climate change was also addressed, including wildfires, mudslides, glacier melting, and excessive heat. “It’s a challenge for all of us, what we are seeing across the country, we are all connected. We have the responsibility to call the signal and do more for our future generations,” he stated. “We are connected and global health matters.” He then addressed COVID-19 by saying, “We recognize we have a responsibility of what we learned from COVID-19 and ways to move forward.”

Dr. Shah closed his address by sharing, “Environmental health for all, not just for some, by all of us coming together. I want to thank you for every single day of going to work to build communities. If we do this well, we can absolutely change the world and do good.” He then read the proclamation from Governor Inslee that declared June 28, 2022, as Environmental Public Health Professionals Day.



Carol Evans, chairperson of the Spokane Tribal Council, shared the importance of the history of the land and its connection to the Spokane people.

Grand Session Kickoff

The Grand Session Kickoff on June 29 featured a panel discussion focused on the challenges the environmental health workforce has faced and still faces regarding COVID-19 practices. During the 90-minute session, the panel discussed the threats, violence, and unprecedented working conditions that environmental health professional faced during the last 2 years. The panel also explored how we can learn from this experience and move forward in a positive direction.

The panel, moderated by President Kroeger, included:

- Eric Bradley, deputy director for Linn County Public Health in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. During the first 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic, he was environmental health manager for the Scott County Health Department in Davenport, Iowa.
- Tom Gonzales, public health director for the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment in Fort Collins, Colorado. Prior to this position, he served as deputy public



The Grand Session Kickoff panelists addressed many of the challenges the environmental health workforce faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Featured Speakers (continued)

health director at El Paso County Public Health in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and oversaw programs for environmental health and emergency preparedness and response.

- Niki Lemin, assistant health commissioner and environmental health director of Franklin County Public Health in Columbus, Ohio. Prior to her current position, she served in several state and local capacities. Lemin currently serves on the NEHA Board of Directors as regional vice-president for Region 6 and is cochair of the International Code Council/NEHA Pandemic Task Force.

Gonzales summed up the situation within his district by saying, “As the pandemic went on, we all got fatigued. Folks were getting tired of us. But I look back and say, ‘Did we do the right thing?’ We did, we saved lives every day. It was tough. We all have trauma over it and now we need to talk about it. What we do makes a difference.”

Closing Session



The Closing Session provided attendees with insights on foodborne illness investigations and outbreaks from prominent foodborne illness lawyer William Marler.

The Closing Session—A Lawyer’s View of Modern Foodborne Outbreaks—was given by William “Bill” Marler, an accomplished attorney and national expert in food safety. Marler Clark, The Food Safety Law Firm has represented thousands of individuals in claims against food com-

panies whose contaminated products have caused life altering injury and death. Marler has become the most prominent foodborne illness lawyer in the U.S. and is a major force in food policy here and abroad. He began litigating foodborne illness cases in 1993 when he represented Brianne Kiner, the most seriously injured survivor of the historic *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak that occurred in four states in the Northwest at Jack in the Box restaurants.

Marler outlined the pathway of a foodborne illness investigation, “The most important thing in an outbreak investigation, in my view, is the environmental investigation, the product traceback, and getting the product off the market.” He continued with the necessity of proving a case using laboratory tests, adhering to strict product liability, defining the “manufacturer,” and proving negligence. Marler claimed that the only defense to foodborne outbreak cases is prevention.

2022 AEC SESSION TRACKS

1. Climate & Health

- » Climate Change

2. Data & Technology

- » Environmental Health Tracking & Informatics
- » Technology & Environmental Health

3. Emergency Preparedness

- » Emergency Preparedness & Response

4. Food Safety

- » Cannabis
- » Food Safety & Defense
- » Home Restaurants

5. General Environmental Health

- » Air Quality
- » Body Art
- » Emerging Environmental Health Issues

- » Food Waste

- » General Environmental Health

- » Global Environmental Health

- » Hazardous & Toxic Materials

- » Solid Waste

- » Sustainability

6. Healthy Communities

- » EH Health Impact Assessment

- » Healthy Homes & Communities

- » Land Use Planning & Design

- » Lead

- » Schools & Institutions

7. Infectious & Vectorborne Diseases

- » Pathogens & Outbreaks

- » Vector Control & Zoonotic Diseases

8. Special Populations

- » Children’s Environmental Health

- » Environmental Justice

- » Uniformed Services

9. Water Quality

- » Onsite Wastewater

- » Premise Plumbing

- » Private Drinking Water

- » Recreational Water (including shorelines)

- » Water Quality

- » Water Reuse

10. Workforce & Leadership

- » Leadership, Management, & Enumeration

- » Student & Young Professional Career Development

Education & Training

For the first time in our 85-year history of hosting the AEC, the conference was delivered in a hybrid format that allowed attendees to participate in person and virtually. Almost 1,400 registered individuals—991 in person and 394 virtually—attended more than 200 educational sessions, three featured sessions, and a poster session that showcased 25 research projects.

Included within the main session tracks (see page 52) were emerging environmental and public health issues such as the ongoing fentanyl crisis, climate change including flooding and wildfires, environmental justice and mental health after disasters, and COVID-19 and wastewater surveillance.

Two educational sessions focused on the current fentanyl crisis. Dr. Nicole Rodin, an assistant professor at the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences within Washington State University, presented a captivating discussion on the current illicit fentanyl data and trends, what illicit fentanyl is, how it is a unique opioid, and current harm reduction strategies and their value. Dr. Rodin's session was followed by a presentation given by U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Agents Jacob D. Galvan from the Seattle Field Division and Mark T. Haigh from the Spokane District Office. They spoke of the primary mission of DEA to identify and target the most dangerous individuals and organizations who are causing harm and bringing violence to our communities, as well as how we as environmental and public health professionals can work together to address the skyrocketing number of lethal overdoses and reduce drug-related violence through education and awareness.

The NEHA Climate Health Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership (CHAMP) Framework and Program was unveiled during a panel discussion. The panel provided an overview of the program that featured a paradigm or modeling approach to shed light on climate change and the role of the environmental health workforce. The panel included members from state, tribal, local, and territorial jurisdictions who shared their perspectives on climate change and response to environmental health hazards as both emerging and ignored issues. The panel maintained a sharp focus on equity and environmental justice as they discussed the opportunities and dilemmas facing environmental health profession-



als who serve the diverse needs of vulnerable populations and communities.

The 2022 AEC brought with it a multitude of educational sessions that focused on a variety of aspects related to COVID-19. In a session titled, Addressing the Pandemic From the Sewer: Highlights From New Mexico's COVID-19 Wastewater Surveillance Program in Congregate Settings, T. Justin Garoutte, the health equity director for the New Mexico Department of Health, told the story of an innovative wastewater surveillance program. From December 2020 to October 2021, the New Mexico Environment Department launched and operated a wastewater surveillance program to monitor SARS-CoV-2 at

congregate settings in the state to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The NEHA 2023 AEC is scheduled for July 31–August 3, 2023, in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Call of Abstracts was opened from August 29 to September 30, 2022. We are exploring many relevant topics for the 2023 AEC, including sessions on the latest data and technologies; emerging issues such indoor air quality, emerging pathogens, risk communications, and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS); infectious diseases such as monkeypox and polio; flooding, wildfires, and hurricanes; environmental justice; and workforce diversity. Visit www.neha.org/aec for all the latest 2023 AEC information and news.

Education & Training

Preconference Courses & Workshops

We continued the tradition of hosting a variety of beneficial preconference offerings on June 26–28, 2022. Over 250 attendees enhanced their AEC experience by attending one of 10 preconference offerings at the 2022 AEC.

The Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS) Review Course prepared 13 attendees for the REHS/RS credential examination. The Certified Professional–Food Safety (CP-FS) Review Course prepared nine individuals for the CP-FS credential examination. Over 30 affiliate leaders came together for the Affiliate Leadership Workshop to learn about marketing, event planning, technology, and much more to better serve their environmental health associations. Nearly 20 attendees learned about the fundamentals of body art facility inspection in the Body Art Facility Inspector Training held in partnership with the Body Art Education Alliance. Motivational, inspirational, and educational speaker John Wilson presented the workshop, *The 11 Principles of Leadership*, to over 50 attendees. Attendees of the workshop were provided with tools they can use every day to provide purpose and direction to their daily lives and long-term goals.

Some of the most successful virtual workshops from the 2021 AEC Virtual Series were translated to in-person offerings at the 2022 AEC. The Environmental Health and Land Reuse Certificate Program Workshop explored the environmental and health risks and social disparities associated with contaminated land properties, key players in land reuse planning and policy, and redevelopment techniques to improve community health. The NEHA Private Water Network hosted the Effective Education and Outreach for Private Drinking Water Systems Workshop. The workshop featured a combination of presentations and interactive sessions on effective resources and innovative approaches to positively influence well water testing behavior in private well owners, as well as how to overcome challenges related to well water testing.

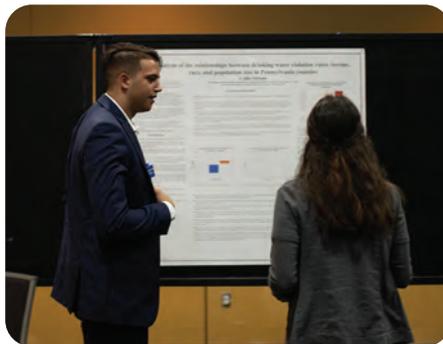
As in previous years, we utilized partnerships to provide crucial training to preconference attendees. We once again partnered with ecoAmerica to offer the Climate for Health Ambassador Training, which addressed the growing concern of climate



change. Approximately 50 participants were equipped with knowledge, hands-on experience, and resources to speak and act confidently on climate change and solutions. In the NEHA/Food and Drug Administration National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards Self-Assessment and Verification Audit Workshop, nearly 100 attendees were given an overview of the program standards criteria and hands-on experience in conducting a self-assessment or verification audit.

Two new preconference sessions were offered in Spokane. We partnered with the Washington State Environmental Health Association to hold the Putting Weather Data to Work for Public Health Prevention and Climate Readiness Workshop that focused on the use of meteorological data and climate services in the context of public health practice. In the Using a Health in All Policy Approach to Addressing Childhood Lead Poisoning Workshop, attendees learned about tools and resources to address lead contamination in homes.

Student Activities



Students continue to be an important part of our community. To recognize this key group

of members, we held a Student Welcome Reception before the Keynote Address on June 28. During this networking event, students had the opportunity to connect with our leadership and get acquainted with the programs and services we offer for the next generation of environmental health professionals at the AEC and throughout the year.

Over 20 student posters were displayed at the in-person Exhibit Hall and 9 posters were displayed in the virtual Poster Hall. Posters provided insights on the latest research in a variety of topics including Lyme disease in West Virginia, informatics in environmental health, extreme weather impacts, and much more.

2022 AEC Evaluation Survey Results

The 2022 AEC Evaluation Survey showed that 91% of attendees who completed our survey rated the AEC as excellent (32%), very good (42%), or good (17%). Comments from the survey respondents included, “The schedule was well organized, the activities were engaging, and it was nice to have the option to attend many different tracks,” and “I didn’t attend one meeting that wasn’t informational and well done.”

Of the respondents, 91% said they would attend again. As one respondent stated, “The NEHA AEC fills my emotional cup, professionally speaking. I can attend training anywhere but being among my peers for this experience every year is worth every penny and then some.”

The highest attended educational sessions were in the Food Safety, Workforce & Leadership, Climate & Health, Water Quality, and General Environmental Health tracks. The overall most attended session was the Grand Session Kickoff—Challenges Facing the Environmental Health Workforce Regarding COVID-19 Practices—with 78% of respondents indicating that they attended the session. Of those attending the AEC, the majority of individuals work in city, county, or state health departments or in the private sector.

Top reasons for attending the AEC included education (especially to earn continuing education contact hours) and networking with peers. “I always learn something useful from the sessions and the networking is wonderful,” stated one respondent.

Social Events

Breakfast & Town Hall Assembly

Attendees packed the room on the morning of June 30 to get an update on the association. NEHA leadership opened the Town Hall with a brief review of the year. We wrapped up a comprehensive strategic planning process in the past year and as part of that process, we created a new vision (Healthy environments. Protected communities. Empowered professionals.) and a new mission statement (To build, sustain, and empower an effective environmental health workforce).

NEHA staff have worked hard over the last year on the creation of a new NEHA logo and brand, which was approved by the NEHA Board of Directors in April 2022 and will be launched in fall 2022. The new logo design reflects the development of both NEHA and the profession. Staff are also working on the design of a new website, which will be organized for easier navigation and function, as well as reflect the new logo and branding. Closing the year in review, NEHA President-Elect Dr. D. Gary Brown stated that “the orga-



nization remains focused on supporting the environmental health workforce.”

The Town Hall also featured an update from the American Academy of Sanitarians on the state of their organization. Candidates for the position of NEHA second vice-president for the 2023 election were welcomed to address those in attendance. Long-time NEHA member Scott Holmes from Lincoln, Nebraska, took the opportunity to state his interest in the position and shared his platform. The Town Hall concluded after several minutes of questions and answers between attendees and NEHA leadership and staff.

Reconnecting on the River Networking Event

Approximately 700 attendees enjoyed a mild summer evening along the winding Spokane River on June 30 for the Reconnecting on the River Networking Event. Attendees spent the evening relaxing, mingling, and reconnecting with one another while enjoying live music by local performer Gavin McLaughlin. We have not had the opportunity to connect in person with old and new friends in a relaxed manner and many attendees stayed at the event long after it had ended.

Along with dinner, drinks, and live music, attendees were able to snap a photo in the event photo booth to commemorate the evening. Thank you to Tyler Technologies for sponsoring the event photo booth and providing our attendees with a small memento of the good times had while reconnecting with friends and colleagues. We also thank the attendees for making the Reconnecting on the River Event a night to remember.



2022 AEC SPONSORS, PARTNERS, AND CONTRIBUTORS

We appreciate the following sponsors, organizations, and individuals who helped make the 2022 AEC possible!

Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor

HS GovTech

Platinum Sponsors

NSF International

Tyler Technologies

Gold Sponsors

Accela

Hedgerow Software

Purell (GOJO Industries)

Silver Sponsors

EcoSure

Inspect2GO Environmental Health Inspection and Permitting Software

Partners and Contributors

Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health

Council on Education for Public Health

ecoAmerica, Climate for Health

Food and Drug Administration

Marler Clark, The Food Safety Law Firm

NEHA Endowment Fund Donators (see page 38)

NEHA Technical Advisors (see page 49)

Uniformed Services Environmental Health Association

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Washington Department of Health

Washington State Environmental Health Association

Exhibition

The Exhibit Hall at the 2022 AEC was an exciting place to be on June 28 and 29, especially as we have not been able to connect face-to-face in over 2 years. Since the 2022 AEC was a hybrid event, exhibitors connected with attendees in person in the Exhibit Hall and virtually through the conference app. A total of 38 companies exhibited at the 2022 AEC. Representatives from the companies and organizations were available for 2 days to answer attendee questions and highlight their products and services.

The Exhibit Hall opened on June 28 with the Exhibition Grand Opening. As in past years, this event was highly attended. Excitement was in the air and attendees were thrilled to connect with the exhibitors and to explore their booths. The exhibitors—both new and familiar—were able to share with attendees their products and services designed to make environmental health professionals more efficient and productive. The event was also a time for attendees to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

Morning and afternoon beverage breaks sponsored by GOJO Industries were held in the Exhibit Hall on June 29. We also hosted an inaugural series of exhibitor demonstrations during both breaks and over the lunch hour. The demonstrations were well attended and well received by the attendees, and they made the Exhibit Hall the place to be during breaks between the educational sessions. The demonstrations were led by representatives from Hedgerow Software, HS GovTech, and Inspect2GO.

Located in the center of the Exhibit Hall was the NEHA booth—a popular place for people to interact with NEHA staff and board



members. Attendees were able to learn about the many NEHA programs and educational offerings, as well as pick up a complimentary copy of the June 2022 *Journal of Environmental Health*.

The NEHA booth also incorporated a new game at the 2022 AEC to engage participants and help them learn more about the services and history of NEHA. The game was a spinning wheel with 12 categories: credentialing, scholarships/internships/awards, *Journal of Environmental Health*, training, AEC, advocacy, funding, NEHA history, workforce, membership, social media, and wild card (pick a category). Participants spun the

wheel and were asked a question pertaining to the category they landed on. The game was a hit with Exhibit Hall goers and provided a fun way to engage and learn more about NEHA. While the questions were challenging, attendees found it interesting and often stayed to play multiple rounds. NEHA staff awarded players with their choice of a prize that included candy, fidget toys, or NEHA swag.

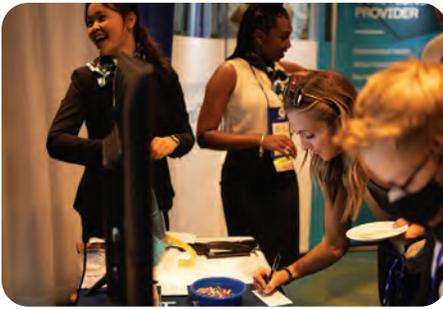
We thank all of the companies and organizations that exhibited at the 2022 AEC. We appreciate your dedication to the environmental health profession and appreciate your willingness to connect with our attendees.

EXHIBIT AT THE 2023 AEC



Join Us in New Orleans!

Registration for the 2023 AEC exhibition will open on October 1, 2022. The 2023 AEC Exhibit Hall will be held on July 31 and August 1, 2023, with additional networking opportunities available to exhibitors throughout the whole conference. Early-bird pricing will be offered until February 28, 2023 (if space is available). Contact NEHA Sales Manager Soni Fink at sfink@neha.org or (303) 802-2139 for questions regarding exhibition or sponsorship opportunities. Take advantage of this opportunity to showcase your products and services to over 1,300 environmental health professionals!



2022 AEC EXHIBITORS

- Acela
- American Academy of Sanitarians
- Association of Food and Drug Officials
- Bruker Scientific, LLC
- CDP, Inc.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Environmental Health/Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice
- Citizens For Radioactive Radon Reduction (CR3)
- Council for the Model Aquatic Health Code
- Craft3/Washington State Department of Ecology
- EcoSure—A Division of Ecolab
- Enthalpy Analytical LLC
- Environmental Information Association
- Glo Germ Company
- GOJO Industries
- Hedgerow Software
- HS GovTech
- Inspect2GO—Environmental Health Inspection and Permitting Software
- National Environmental Assessment Reporting System
- National Environmental Health Association
- National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council
- National Environmental Public Health Internship Program
- National Registry of Food Safety Professionals
- NEHA-FDA Retail Flexible Funding Model Grant Program
- NSF International
- Pool & Hot Tub Alliance
- Private Water Network
- Procter & Gamble
- Relavent Systems, Inc.
- SciAps Inc
- StateFoodSafety
- Sweeps Software, Inc.
- Taylor Technologies, Inc.
- ThermoWorks, Inc.
- Tyler Technologies
- The University of Findlay
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development/Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Research and Development

2022 AEC Mobile App Game

More than 400 in-person and virtual attendees participated in the 2022 AEC Mobile App Game and earned points by attending sessions, interacting with exhibitors, and networking with fellow attendees. Winners were selected in a random drawing from attendees who scored the highest point totals. Congratulations to our top winners: David Lerma, Jr. (2023 AEC registration) and Erin Miller (1-year NEHA professional membership). Thank you for participating!







Awards & Scholarships

We were proud to bestow several national awards and scholarships to outstanding individuals, groups, and programs throughout the country in 2022. From students excelling during unparalleled times and new leaders working on diversity efforts to some of the most recognized names in our professional community, the 2022 honorees illustrate the dedication and selflessness of those in our field. The following people were honored with awards and scholarships in 2022. For more information about our awards, please visit www.neha.org/awards.

AEHAP Student Research Competition Winners

Undergraduate

Collin Oriente

West Chester University

Pilar Santos

Montana State University

Graduate

Nana-Obaayaa Owusu

East Carolina University

Jordan Williams

East Carolina University

Each year the Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP) invites undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in a program accredited by the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) to submit original research projects. Winning entries receive \$1,000 and travel stipends to present their research at the AEC.

Davis Calvin Wagner Sanitarian Award

CAPT Charles S. Otto, III, REHS, DAAS (retired)

This award represents the highest honor that the American Academy of Sanitarians (AAS) bestows on one of its diplomates.

Joe Beck Educational Contribution Award

Robert Powitz, MPH, PhD, RS, CP-FS, DABFET, DLAAS

This award is given annually by NEHA to recognize an individual or team for an educational contribution designed for the advancement and professional development of environmental health professionals.



AEHAP representatives Dr. Ben Ryan (far left) and Jamie Hisel (far right) stand with student winners Jordan Williams, Nana-Obaayaa Owusu, Collin Oriente, Pilar Santos, and Carli Koenig (from left to right). Photo courtesy of Carla Brown, AEHAP.

NEHA/AAS Scholarships

Undergraduate

Michelle Leonard

Montana State University

Haley Ritchie

The University of Findlay

Graduate

Mindy Chambrelli

University of New England

Both NEHA and AAS believe that structured education at the undergraduate and graduate levels is important to an individual's successful professional development in the environmental health field and that continuing education is a vital component in the continued career growth of environmental health professionals. As such, three scholarships are awarded annually—one to a graduate student and two to undergraduate students. More information on the NEHA/AAS scholarships can be found at www.neha.org/scholarship.

NEHA Affiliate Certificates of Merit

Certificates of Merit are awarded to NEHA affiliate members and teams who made exemplary contributions to the profession. Each affiliate selects winners based on its own criteria for recognition. The nominating affiliate is indicated in parentheses.

Individuals

Steve Alder (UT)

Everton Baker (Jamaica)

J. Victor Baldovinos (TX)

Jaqueline Summer Burpee Beard (posthumously, AL)

Ilda Bengui (National Capital Area)

Carolyn Picard Bombet (LA)

Nikki Burns Savage (NV)

Michael Crea (FL)



CAPT Charles Otto addressed the audience after being named the recipient of the Davis Calvin Wagner Sanitarian Award.

Tosa Dyer (MO)

Kira Flagstead (MT)

Jason Kloss (MN)

CDR Jamie Mutter (Uniformed Services)

Josie Prince (WY)

Aimee Puluso (NJ)

Robin Raijean (IA)

Joshua Skeggs (CO)

Rike Sterrett (MA)

Stephen Yenco (CT)

Teams

Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee: Mel Knight (chair), Alicia Collins, Brian Collins, Gary Coleman, and Robert Custard (Past Presidents)

Florida Environmental Health Association 2021 Annual Conference Committee: Ed Bettinger, Michael Crea, Greg Crumpton, Trisha Dall, Gary Frank, DaJuane Harris, Kimberly Stockdale, and Tim Wallace (FL)

Iowa Environmental Health Association Scholarship Committee: Sandy Bubke, Matt Even, Bridget Mohler, Robin Raijean, and Jessica Sheridan (IA)

Retail Food Standards Program: Environmental Health Section of Riverstone Health. Leadership for the Retail Food Team has been Clark Snyder and Marilyn Tapia. (MT)

Betsy Seals and M.L. Tanner: For their research projects, Emerging Compounds in Public Drinking Water and Is the Time Right for South Carolina to Develop a Lead Authorization Program (SC)

Statewide Accelerated Public Health for Every Community (SAPHE) Act 2.0: Massachusetts Public Health Nurses Association (MA)

Yankee Conference Organizers: Scott Cook, Kevin Elak, Dianne Harding, and Mariam Hosseini (CT)

NEHA Past Presidents Award

Michèle Samarya-Timm, MA, HO, MCHES, REHS, DLAAS

Each year, the NEHA Past Presidents Affiliate identifies a hero or group of heroes from the profession of environmental health.

NEHA Presidential Citations

Certificates are given to those individuals who made exemplary impacts on the association during the term of office of the NEHA president. President Roy Kroeger conferred Presidential Citations to the following individuals:

For exceptional service to the NEHA-FDA Retail Flexible Funding Model Grant Program:

Rance Baker **Maribeth Niesen**
Rosie DeVito **Dr. Manjit (Mike)**
Art Johnstone **Randhawa**
Jaclyn Miller

For superior organization and execution in support of the 2021 NEHA office relocation:

Steven Dourdis
Michael Newman
Cole Wilson



Hedgerow Software CEO Neil Grinwis (left) and NEHA Past President Dr. Priscilla Oliver (right) presented Michèle Samarya-Timm (middle) with the NEHA Past Presidents Award and honorarium.

In recognition of outstanding service and leadership on the NEHA Board of Directors during the last year:

Dr. D. Gary Brown

In recognition of outstanding service and support during my entire tenure on the NEHA Board of Directors:

Tiffany Gaertner



NEHA President Roy Kroeger announced his Presidential Citations to honor those individuals who made exemplary contributions during his presidency.

NSF Student Research Scholar

Carli Koenig

Missouri Southern State University

AEHAP, in partnership with NSF, offers a \$3,500 internship to one undergraduate student from an EHAC-accredited program. The selected student completes an 8–10-week internship on a research project identified by NSF.

Walter F. Snyder Environmental Health Award

CAPT Luis O. Rodriguez, MS, REHS/RS, CP-FS, CPO, DAAS

The Snyder Award was created in 1971 in honor of Walter F. Snyder, cofounder and first executive director of NSF. Presented by NSF and NEHA, this award is given annually to individuals who continue Snyder's legacy through outstanding contributions to environmental and public health. NSF and NEHA are proud to announce that CAPT Luis O. Rodriguez, MS, REHS/RS, CP-FS, CPO, DAAS, is the 2022 recipient of the Walter F. Snyder Environmental Health Award. CAPT Rodriguez is a senior environmental health specialist for the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) assigned to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and has dedicated his career of more than 20 years to safeguarding environmental health and safety.

“From improving emergency preparedness to strengthening environmental health programs nationwide, Luis has spent his entire career demonstrating his commitment to improving and protecting public health,” said Pedro Sancha, president and CEO of NSF. “Luis has established an impressive track record of consensus-building and leadership throughout his career in environmental health, both in the U.S. and beyond,” said Dr. David Dyjack, executive director of



CAPT Luis Rodriguez graciously accepted the 2022 Walter F. Snyder Environmental Health Award given by NSF and NEHA.

NEHA. “Most recently, his leadership has been leveraged through a total of four CDC deployments to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic in cruise ships, emergency intake sites, and more. Luis continues to be called on by our nation in recognition of his expertise in environmental health, vessel sanitation, and emergency preparedness and response.”

For the past two decades, CAPT Rodriguez has served in fundamental roles addressing environmental hazards and improving environmental health services. In his role at CDC, he leads efforts to modernize the national environmental health workforce by helping state

and local health departments improve the collection, integration, dissemination, and use of data related to environmental health services.

Through his extensive work in vessel sanitation, CAPT Rodriguez helped prevent the introduction of acute gastroenteritis into the U.S. from cruise ships sailing from foreign to domestic ports since 2010. He directed more than 3,000 operational and construction inspections, numerous outbreak surveillance and investigations, more than 50 training seminars for cruise ship managers, and served on deployments to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

CAPT Rodriguez has received numerous awards for his leadership and commitment to environmental health. He most recently received a USPHS Outstanding Service Medal as well as the National Center for Environmental Health and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's Excellence in Quantitative Sciences Award. He was also nominated for the USPHS Environmental Health Officer Advisory Committee's Ted Moran Award.

Read the full award press release at www.nsf.org/news/luis-rodriguez-recognized-nsf-national-environmental-health-association-neha-walter-f-snyder-environmental-health-award.