

NEHA NEWS

lating these facilities. We were also able to take the information from the classroom and apply it during field visits of water vending facilities.

Topics presented during the training included:

- general principles of water treatment,
- water treatment components,
- taking water samples, and
- maximum contaminant levels.

Prior to the training, we directed a tabletop exercise on protecting Guam's water supply during an emergency event. The exercise focused on partnership development and highlighted the value of bringing diverse organizations to the table to protect public health during a disaster or emergency event.

Special thanks to Nikki Burns Savage of the Southern Nevada Health District who helped with the training, as well as representatives from the Guam Department of Environmental Health, Guam Environmental Protection Agency, and Guam Waterworks Authority for participating in the exercise.

NEHA Staff Profiles

As part of tradition, we feature new staff members in the *Journal* around the time of their 1-year anniversary. These profiles give you an opportunity to get to know the NEHA staff better and to learn more about the great programs and activities going on in your association. This month we are pleased to introduce you to four NEHA staff member. Contact information for all NEHA staff can be found on pages 48 and 49.



Faye Blumberg

I joined NEHA in October 2021 as an instructional designer with the Entrepreneurial Zone (EZ) department. Since starting at NEHA, I have been able to work on a variety of credentialing courses, as well as the Body Art Facility Inspector Training. One thing I love about this role is that I get to be involved in a lot of different things at once—it

is never boring! Some of the projects I get to start from scratch, where others are revamping something existing. I absolutely love the EZ team and the culture of teamwork.

I am originally from the Detroit, Michigan, area and studied biology and chemistry at Michigan State University. My master's degree from Michigan State University is in curriculum and instruction. Before working at NEHA, I was in public education for 13 years. I started as a high school science teacher and then switched to an instructional coach and curriculum writer. I also taught with the U.S. Peace Corps from 2016–2018 on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

In my spare time I can usually be found outside with my dog, Lola. I love to trail run, mountain bike, fly fish, and teach yoga.



Chana Goussetis

I came to NEHA as the communications and marketing director after 20 years of work within local public health in Boulder, Colorado, in roles as a health educator, emergency preparedness planner, and communications and marketing manager. I hold a master's degree in integrated marketing communications and apply this knowledge and experience at

NEHA daily to help the team get the word out about opportunities for education, funding, and community for the environmental health workforce, as well as help amplify the collective environmental health voice at the federal level.

I am passionate about raising the profile of NEHA nationally so that we can do even more for our members and for the profession as a whole. I am working toward this goal now by leading our rebrand and website redesign efforts, as well as developing a national campaign to bring visibility and understanding of the profession to the public and decision makers.



Nicole Kinash

Prior to my time as a NEHA employee (and as a Colorado resident), I grew up in Mahopac, New York, a small community in the Lower Hudson Valley. I attended The Ohio State University and graduated with a bachelor of science in earth sciences. During my time there, I was involved in numerous research projects as a research assistant within the School

of Earth Sciences. After graduation I accepted a role as a hydrogeologist at an environmental consulting firm based in Columbus, Ohio.

I moved to Denver in 2021 in search of new adventures and growth opportunities. I am currently a part-time graduate student at the University of Denver, pursuing a master's degree in environmental policy and management with a concentration in energy and sustainability. I aim to take on the urgent environmental challenges of our time and help develop meaningful policies and practical, sustainable solutions. In my free time I love being outdoors and exploring Colorado's endless trails and parks, whether by walking, hiking, or snowboarding. I am also passionate about playing music and following hockey and college football.

I joined NEHA in October 2021, accepting an administrative and logistical support role with the EZ department. My responsibilities mainly include being the participant manager for the FDA training courses. My goal is to help enable a good learning environment for those in the environmental health profession taking our courses. During my first year with NEHA, I have enjoyed getting to meet and work with so many amazing individuals, as well as developing a more comprehensive understanding of food safety and environmental health.



Melodie Lake

I joined NEHA in October 2021 as the editor/copywriter for the EZ department. I provide different levels of editing support to EZ depending on the project, giving me the opportunity to work on a variety of materials. I love that I never know what sorts of things I might be asked to edit on any given day, from a training course given via

PowerPoint to a textbook, or even video subtitles. The EZ team has been incredibly welcoming and supportive, and I am so glad to have joined them. It is heartening to know that my opinions and skills can help NEHA make a difference for environmental health professionals.

The road that led me here has been a winding one. I grew up in central Arizona and received my bachelor of arts degree in English from Northern Arizona University. From there, I moved to Tucson, where I spent several years working various jobs and eating excel-

lent food. I found that I have a talent for technical writing and pursued both a career and my masters of science from Northeastern University in that field. After spending 10 years working as a technical writer and manager of a content management system in the health insurance industry, I decided to broaden my horizons. I worked briefly for an engineering firm as a technical editor, then came to work at NEHA.

My partner and I moved to Denver in 2016 because we love the outdoors and Colorado's summer and fall are pretty much perfect. We have an adventure-loving dog named Mocha and we enjoy taking her hiking, snowshoeing, paddle boarding, and camping. I also enjoy reading in my spare time and I cohost a women's comic book club.

Outside of writing for my job, I also write creatively. I have finished two novels and am getting ready to pitch one to agents and editors in the fall. My short stories have appeared in several places around the web and I am always trying to find time and energy (not to mention ideas) for more. 🐾

DiracTalk

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in our nation's capital and it was virtually standing-room only. Everyone drinks and eats, and these legacy chemicals are seemingly everywhere and in everything. This issue is not red or blue—it is a universal public health issue.

So where do we go from here? I tender a few thoughts for our network of environmental health professionals.

I believe all of us should be modestly knowledgeable with the PFAS conversation. I encourage you to keep abreast of emerging health advisories and related guidance with an eye to being the voice of science in your local communities. We should be the chief science officers of our communities. As I craft this column, the World Health Organization has declared monkeypox a global health emergency. While not an environmental health issue per se, we should use opportunities like monkeypox and PFAS to share the breadth and depth of our knowledge. Let us stay on top of these issues to minimize misinformation and disinformation.

I feel PFAS is, as some have characterized, the asbestos of this generation. While there is not currently a signature disease associ-



Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) on the agenda at the 76th Interstate Environmental Health Seminar held on July 20–22, 2022, in Ellicott City, Maryland. Photo courtesy of David Dyjack.

ated with it, like lung cancer and emphysema (tobacco), mesothelioma (asbestos), and cognitive brain damage (lead), I bet that day is coming. Our profession should show up and speak up when the inevitable public hearings occur—it is our opportunity to lead.

Our association should consider crafting and publishing a strong policy state-

ment that is suitable for adoption by state and local jurisdictions. A formal association statement would provide a template for others to duplicate and provide a more homogenous voice in this major environmental health challenge.

Beginning in 2023, U.S. EPA will require some of the largest public drinking water systems to monitor for 29 different PFAS chemicals. Let us get prepared now to provide useful science-based recommendations to assist our communities with difficult decision making. Our offices and agencies should be prepared to help them interpret data and, in the process, raise our visibility and value to society.

The breadth and depth of environmental health issues our profession is asked to address is daunting on most days. We feel like traffic cops in a busy urban intersection after school recesses for the day. But when the giant issues of our era are upon us, such as PFAS, let us own them. We at NEHA will do our part to ensure you have access to the information you need to know when you need to know it. 🐾

DAVE

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