

NEHA SECOND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PROFILES

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) is governed by a corporate board of directors who oversee the affairs of the association. The board is made up of two groups: national officers and regional vice-presidents. NEHA elects its national officers through a ballot that goes to all active and life members prior to the annual conference. Among other things, the ballot features the election for the position of NEHA second vice-president. The person elected to this position begins a 5-year commitment to NEHA that involves advancing each year to a different national office, eventually to become NEHA's president.

Election policy specifies that candidate profiles for the second vice-president be limited to 800 words in total length. If a candidate's profile exceeds that limit, the policy requires that the profile is terminated at the last sentence before the 800-word limit is exceeded. In addition, the submitted profiles have not been grammatically edited, but presented as submitted and within the 800-word limitation. This year, NEHA presents two candidates for the office of second vice-president. The candidates are listed alphabetically.



Michele DiMaggio, REHS

Michele R. DiMaggio has a Bachelor of Science in Biological Science with a concentration in Entomology. She began her career in 1995 as a Seasonal Agricultural Biologist with the California Department of Agriculture; then became employed with Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District as a Vector Control Technician. In 2001, she began her

Environmental Health journey as an Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) with Contra Costa County, Health Services Department, Environmental Health Services in California. As an EHS, Michele taught Food Safety Certification for Manager Courses for 6 years and joined the California Department of Public Health's Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER) as a Subject Matter Expert and an instructor. Starting in August 2013, she took on the responsibility as a Supervising Environmental Health Specialist for the division's Retail Food program. She is a member of the Contra Costa Health Services Department's Emergency Management and Foodborne Illness Outbreak Investigation Teams. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Michele is currently deployed as a Disaster Service Worker as a Locations Investigator Manager in the Public Health Case and Contact Tracing Branch. She has the obligation of overseeing the unit responsible for outreach, guidance, and data input for hospitals, detention facilities, day care, preschools, law enforcement, emergency responders, food facilities, gyms, and most workplaces in Contra Costa County experiencing COVID-19 cases and close contacts.

Additionally, Michele is a National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) Region 2 Vice-President and Food Safety Subject Matter Expert. As a NEHA representative, Michele is a member of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Board of Scientific Counselors, Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Surveillance Working Group. She has had the privilege and joy to be a NEHA/CDC Instructor and Mentor for the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico Hurricane Supplemental Projects and currently a NEHA Environmental Health Leadership Academy Mentor. She also participates on the Partnership for Food Protection (PFP) Training & Credentialing and Surveillance, Response, and Post-Response Workgroups. Additionally, she is a U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA), Office of Training, Education and Development Food Safety Subject Matter Expert and Temporary Food Estab-

lishments Course Trainer. She has served as a Food Safety Matter Expert for the collaborative U.S. FDA Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS) National Curriculum Standard (NCS) Framework since 2015. Locally, Michele serves as a member of the California Retail Food Safety Coalition.



Larry Ramdin, MPH, MA, REHS/RS, CP-FS, HHS, CHO

My name is Larry Ramdin and I am a candidate for NEHA second vice-president and I am asking for your vote and support of my candidacy.

I began my environmental health career over 40 years ago in Trinidad and Tobago, starting as a field operator in an *Aedes aegypti* control program. I attended the

Barbados Community College where I completed a 2-year Certificate in Public Health Inspection and graduated at the top of my class. I also earned a Diploma in the Inspection of Meat and Other Foods from the Barbados Community College. I attended Northeastern University, Boston MA and earned a BS in Health Sciences, Magna Cum Laude and a Master of Public Health. I also have an MA-Public Administration, Framingham State College. I am a NEHA Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS), Certified Practitioner-Food Safety (CP-FS), Healthy Housing Specialist (HHS) and a Massachusetts Certified Health Officer (CHO).

I was elected to the NEHA Board of Directors (BOD) in 2016 as the Region 9 Vice-President and I have served on all Board committees except the Nominations Committee and I am currently Chair of the Credentialing Committee. As a Board member, I have vociferously advocated for the marketing of environmental health as a profession as many are unaware of what environmental health professional does and the value we bring to the Public Health arena. I was able to secure NEHA e-mails and contributed to the development of an onboarding process for new Board members.

NEHA is doing a great job at serving the membership and is blessed with a knowledgeable and competent staff led by our outstanding Executive Director, Dr. David Dyjack. Our team is doing a largely unrecognized job in serving the profession and our members.

However, there will always be areas in which our activities can be enhanced to create greater value for our members and the profession at large. I pledge to work tirelessly to advocate for the following if elected second vice-president:

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- I chose Environmental Health because this profession has the greatest impact on human lives and activities. We are the boots on the ground but are hardly recognized for the work we do. We can do a better job at marketing the profession. The majority of our practice is at the local level so we can develop tools for our affiliates and local partners to effectively advocate for the profession while increasing visibility for the profession. We are at a watershed moment in Public Health and must seize the opportunities
- I sincerely believe that information is useless unless it is shared. We can and should create some platform for the exchange of ideas and knowledge across the profession. We deal with many issues across the practice and many times someone else has encountered similar challenges and can share that knowledge. A place where a practitioner in Oregon can seek advice on an EH issue and get advice from practitioners across the country or globe. Because despite geography EH issues and solutions are universal.
- I believe that a mentoring program for our emerging members and students is key to the advancement of our profession. We are blessed with a wealth of knowledge in the profession from the seasoned practitioners, our Academics, and members who have achieved the singular practice honor of being elected to the American Academy of Sanitarians. We can utilize some medium to develop such a mentoring program.

- EH as a profession is made up of both private and public sector members including our service members. We can enhance our inter-sector collaboration, so we increase our knowledge of each other's perspectives while furthering the cause of EH.

I was recognized for my contributions to the profession with several awards. I was most recently recognized for my contributions on the BOD with a NEHA Presidential Citation. I have served as President of the Massachusetts Environmental Health Association and was awarded the Dr. Joseph S. Goldfarb Award for significant contribution during their professional career in the field of environmental health in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Robert Perriello award (Massachusetts Sanitarian of the Year) that acknowledges professional achievements made by Sanitarians in the field of Environmental Health and the Leon Bradley Award that recognizes significant contributions to the Environmental Health field in New England.

I, like you love this profession, we did not choose it because of financial gain or personal recognition but because we can make a difference in the lives of our communities.

I chose to run for second vice-president because I believe my experience and knowledge will serve the profession and NEHA as an organization well and I ask for your support and your vote.



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