

NEHA NEWS

Note of Thanks to Departing Board Members

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the dedication, hard work, and efforts of two members of the NEHA board of directors on the occasion of their departure from the board: Immediate Past President Brian Collins and Region 7 Vice President John Steward.



Immediate Past President Brian Collins leaves the board after 12 years of dedicated service and leadership. In 2009, he was elected second vice president and served as president of NEHA in 2012–2013. Prior to that Brian served as NEHA's Region 5 vice president from 2002 to 2009.

During Brian's tenure, he was appointed to practically every standing presidential committee, authored a number of position and policy statements, and liaised with many national partners, most notably the Food and Drug Administration, in order to promote NEHA and environmental health. Brian was also a principal in reinvigorating NEHA's Student Mentoring program.

Prior to his NEHA service, Brian was president of the Texas Environmental Health Association and Texas Association of Municipal Health Officials. Brian received the American Academy of Sanitarians' Davis Calvin Wagner Award for dedication and accomplishments in leadership, commitment, and resourcefulness in advancing the sanitarian profession at the NEHA 2014 Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition. Retired from active service with the City of Plano, Texas, in January 2014, Brian is now consulting.



Region 7 Vice President John Steward leaves the board after nine years of dedicated service and leadership. John joined the NEHA board in 2005 and served as vice president for both Region 10 (2005–2011) and Region 7 (2011–2014).

John is currently a faculty member in the Division of Environmental Health, School of Public Health, Georgia State University in Atlanta. He teaches graduate courses in environmental and public health and helps to manage and organize research and training around urban health and health disparities. John came to Georgia State eight years ago after a 30-year career in the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). He is a member of the USPHS Commissioned Officers Association and the Uniformed Services and Georgia Environmental Health Associations.

As a board member, John represented NEHA members on matters of policy, governance, and oversight of the association. He served on the finance, international fund, food safety, and sustainability committees. He was the board's liaison to the American Public Health Association's Environment Section. He led a work group to develop definitions of the terms environmental health and environmental health practitioner, which were published in the *Journal* (October

2013). In addition to serving on the board, John chaired several of NEHA's technical sections for 15 years, and he serves as a peer reviewer for the *Journal*. He is a recipient of the NEHA Past Presidents' Award and numerous Presidential Citations.

John states, "NEHA is an organization to be proud of. Its members provide a tremendous range of services to both humankind and make our planet a better place for all. NEHA's officers, directors, and staff are dedicated to serving the association and conducting high-quality, high-impact programs for environmental health professionals, agencies, and our nation. It is gratifying to have worked in this field and to have participated in the development of a well-respected and effective association. It's equally important to have made deep friendships along the way."

NEHA Staff Profiles

As part of tradition, NEHA features new staff members in the *Journal* around the time of their one-year work 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.

**Erik Kosnar**

I joined NEHA in September 2013, and having come from a background in audio engineering and graphic design, I was very excited to lend my skills to an organization that contributes to the environmental health industry. I've spent the last 15 years working for various audio equipment companies designing products and training people

around the country on how to best use them.

At NEHA I am a learning content developer, and to date I have helped with several projects from credential study materials to classroom and e-learning curriculum design. I'm excited that I can bring a passion for training and development to NEHA, and I'm very excited to be working here. It is very fulfilling to work alongside such a dedicated and passionate group of people.

While I'm not a native of Colorado, I've spent the majority of my life here and I love calling this state home. I enjoy spending my time cooking and trying new cuisines from around the world. I also enjoy writing and playing music, even occasionally performing at venues around Denver with my band.

**Matt Lieber**

I joined NEHA in 2013 as a contract employee in the marketing department to assist in the promotion of NEHA's 2013 Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition. A few months later I was proud to be made a full-time member of NEHA's staff as marketing and communications assistant. Being a part of NEHA has been a fantastic experience as it gives me the

NEHA NEWS

opportunity to apply myself towards goals and projects that truly mean something both to me personally and the world at large.

I'm originally from Michigan, where I received two bachelor's degrees from Michigan State University in journalism and political science before moving to Denver in 2008 to attend graduate school. I ultimately received my master's degree from the University of Denver in media, film, and journalism studies (by writing a 300-page thesis on Batman).

My first few jobs out of school were mainly focused on web marketing strategies, first at an e-commerce firm in Detroit, then at a web marketing solutions firm here in Denver. But it was arriving at NEHA that showed me that the private sector was not for me, and that I'd much rather spend my days working with people and organizations that make a real difference in the world. That is what I have found since becoming a part of NEHA.

Before coming to NEHA, I can honestly say the phrase "environmental health" was not part of my vocabulary. But now, after a year working for NEHA, I take pride in understanding the reach and impacts of environmental health and knowing that I provide a small piece in helping environmental health professionals take on the challenges of keeping our food safe, our water clean, and our planet secure for the future.

NHSPI™: Hatching a Plan for Environmental Health

With the help of NEHA Region 7 Vice President Tim Hatch, the environmental health community is actively engaging in further development of the National Health Security Preparedness Index™ (NHSPI™) (www.nhspi.org). The 2014 NHSPI will feature an expanded focus on the role of environmental health in preparedness.

NEHA and other environmental health partners are championing the charge to bring more measures of environmental health preparedness into NHSPI. Hatch, environmental programs, planning, and logistics director at the Alabama Department of

Public Health's Center for Emergency Preparedness, has been appointed to the NHSPI Environmental Health Task Force as a subject-matter expert representing NEHA. In addition to NEHA, representatives from seven other organizations are adding their voices to the expansion of environmental health in NHSPI including the Association of Public Health Laboratories, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) National Center for Environmental Health, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, the Environmental Health Partnership Council, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, and the National Alliance for Radiation Readiness.

NHSPI is the first composite measure of the nation's and states' preparedness. The tool brings together the best available evidence to date to reflect the current state of health security preparedness. The inaugural version was released in December 2013.

ASTHO, under a cooperative agreement with CDC, leads the development of NHSPI with over 50 stakeholder partners. In 2014, the second version of NHSPI will grow to include more and better measures in the areas of environmental health and health care.

NHSPI is a resource to

- get a more complete picture of health emergency preparedness nationwide,
- make more informed decisions on the best use of health security preparedness resources,
- show progress and assess changes in preparedness levels over time,
- identify strengths and gaps in health security preparedness, and
- aid continuous quality improvement.

Version 2.0 of NHSPI is slated for release in December 2014. Check out your state's results and share your ideas for ensuring environmental health is integral to the preparedness picture at www.nhspi.org. 🌐

Now Available Wherever You Are!

Starting October 1, NEHA will offer new membership categories that also offer the option to receive an electronic version of the *Journal of Environmental Health (JEH)*. Check it out!

- New Feature: Download as a PDF for offline reading or printing
- Access web links and e-mail addresses found in articles, ads, and listings
- Read it on any computer or mobile device such as a tablet or smart phone
- Quickly find information using the search feature
- View video content
- Bookmark pages and articles for quick reference

As a NEHA member, you will receive the E-Journal in addition to the hard copy—absolutely free—for all issues of the *JEH* through September 2014 while your membership is active!

Look for it in your inbox and be sure to add staff@neha.org to your list of safe senders.

