

► **DirecTalk** MUSINGS FROM THE 10TH FLOOR

David Dyjack, DrPH, CIH

Planning, creating, and delivering the educational content for the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition is a team effort led in large measure by our Chief Learning Officer Kristie Denbrock. She is the personification of a modern-day alchemist, transforming seemingly mundane content into educational gold. This effort is not trivial as the shearing forces associated with schedules, room sizes, and increasingly expensive technology and social programs make this enterprise daunting. Given this background, it brings me great pleasure to give Kristie an opportunity to provide an overview of the fruits of her labor—the NEHA 2019 AEC. The charming location, scientific relevance, and presence of influencers with regional, national, and international perspectives catalyze to create an amalgam that promises to deliver an exceptional experience.

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Local Voices, Universal Language Kristie Denbrock, MPA

Whether you serve your constituents locally, statewide, nationally, or internationally, the NEHA 2019 AEC taking place July 9–12 in Nashville, Tennessee, has offerings that are tailored to you and your profession by speaking with *Local Voices* that make up a *Universal Language*.

Tuned Into Nashville

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Local Voices, Universal Language is the theme for this year's conference being held at the amazing Gaylord Opryland Resort & Conference Center. After the success of the 2018 AEC in Anaheim, California, it became apparent that issues taking priority on a local level are in the same arena on a global scale. Natural disaster relief is a prime example and will be featured in a discussion of distinguished panelists moderated by Dr. Dyjack.

We are pleased to announce our three featured speakers:

- Robert Kadlec, MS, MTM&H, MD, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services, will present the Keynote Address, "Creating a Voice to Protect the Nation From 21st Century Health Security Threats."

- Anne Godfrey, CCMI FCIM, chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, will deliver the Grand Session Kickoff, "A Profession United? The Evolution of Environmental Health," with an international perspective.
- Grayson C. Brown, PhD, executive director of Puerto Rico Vector Control will provide the Closing Session, "New Threats, New Techniques, New Strategies: The Changing Face of Vector Management."

More information on our featured speakers can be found at www.neha.org/aec/speakers.

These three plenary sessions help set the tone of bringing local and international issues into focus. With approximately 200 educational offerings, attendees will have a multitude of environmental health topics and issues to choose from, including emerging issues such as

- Fentanyl Contamination, Exposure, Detection, Risk, and Decontamination;
- Cannabis and Food Safety: The Latest News and Emerging Issues;
- NEHA LeadHERship sessions;
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)—Opportunities and Challenges; and
- Food Freedom vs. Food Safety: AB 626, California's Newest Law.

To view the full 2019 AEC agenda, visit www.neha.org/aec/sessions.

Conference cosponsors, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National

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The Nashville cityscape at dusk. Known as Music City, Nashville offers a wide variety of inspiring things to do—from music, culture, and the arts to food, sports, and shopping. Photo courtesy of the Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation.

Center for Environmental Health, will be presenting multiple sessions within the Food Safety and Water tracks. Dr. Patrick Breysse, director of the National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry will moderate a panel session titled “How State Level Policy Can Address Emerging Environmental Health Issues.”

Attendees will not only gain valuable knowledge from attending the sessions, they will be able to earn continuing education credits toward their NEHA credentials. The preconference offerings, July 7–9, include NEHA credential review courses; food safety auditor, instructional skills, and Climate for Health ambassador trainings; credential exams; and workshops covering affiliate leadership, food safety, and leadership survival skills. For a complete listing of preconference offerings, visit www.neha.org/aec/preconference.

To support the lifecycle of the environmental health professional, we are offering multiple registration options. Environmental health students and young professionals can take advantage of a discounted registration rate and a 1-year NEHA membership with

registration. The Poster Session is also a great place for students and young professionals to display their research, interests, and areas of study. For additional information, visit www.neha.org/students. Retirees can also benefit from a discounted registration rate and single-day registration options are available. To register for the conference and learn more, visit www.neha.org/aec/register.

After all that learning, we have planned a couple of spectacular evening social events to allow you to unwind, network, and catch up with your peers. On Wednesday, July 10 (included with your full conference registration), we will cruise down the Cumberland River on the General Jackson Showboat where the evening will be filled with local Nashville flavors, music, and dancing.

Sponsored by Underwriters Laboratories on Thursday, July 11, is the don't want to miss Grand Ole Opry House UL Event. This evening will feature a dinner reception on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry where so many of your favorite singers have performed, as well as an exclusive backstage tour. Tickets have been selling fast and space is limited. While still available, tickets can be purchased for \$75 at www.neha.org/aec/events.



While on a site visit of Nashville, National Environmental Health Association staff and conference planners take the stage at the Grand Ole Opry, which was selected as the location of the UL Event. Photo courtesy of David Dyjack.

I would be remiss if I forgot to mention the Exhibition Grand Opening following the Keynote Address on Tuesday, July 9. Attendees can enjoy a beverage and reception fair while strolling through the aisles and socializing with companies and organizations showcasing products and services that support them and their careers.

We at NEHA are proud to serve you in our 83rd year of offering continuing education for the environmental health profession through our annual conferences. We are also proud to offer fun social activities that grant you the opportunity to network, share your expertise, and connect with old friends while making new ones who share your desire and passion in ensuring and building a healthy and safe environment for all.

Visit www.neha.org/aec for all the details about this amazing conference. We look forward to seeing you in Nashville and thank you for your support. 🚗