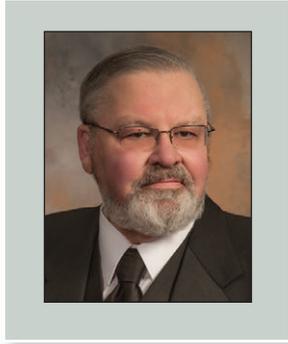


## ► PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



David E. Riggs,  
MS, REHS/RS

## A Time of Change, a Time of Opportunity

We are in a time of great change and opportunity for NEHA. The NEHA board of directors and executive director have accomplished much in reviewing and refocusing our policies and operations to more fully realize the potential of NEHA and the members of our profession.

The environmental health profession is on the brink of unparalleled challenge and opportunity. Many of our traditional programs are either being phased out or scaled down. Other existing programs are being reimagined and restructured. In the next few years, communities will build or greatly expand programs in climate change, sustainability, the built environment, environmental equity, and community safety. All of these are by definition, largely or wholly, environmental health based programs.

Our profession has the education, experience, and community understanding to be leaders in the newly restructured traditional programs, as well as in these newly created and funded programs.

As we look ahead it is not difficult to envision the environmental health profession as having the opportunity to enable implementation of policies and programs that will make our communities healthier and more prepared to counter environmental threats on the horizon. Opportunity and potential are characteristics of the environmental health profession that we have long used to accomplish the successes we have historically experienced. These remain the characteristics we must use to face the changes and challenges that loom ahead of us. As environmental health professionals, it is not only our oppor-

*The environmental health profession is on the brink of unparalleled challenge and opportunity.*

tunity, but also our obligation, to use this time of change to further our profession and prepare ourselves to accept the challenges of an ever-evolving series of programs, areas of expertise, and community-dictated priorities.

So, we know what opportunities lay ahead of us as professional practitioners. Technical advances, jurisdictional restructuring, and an aging workforce with Generation X and Millennials becoming major players in our profession will all create a new landscape in environmental health. These changes will require flexibility, adaptability, and continuing education in technical areas, risk communication, environmental health management, and community involvement.

The current situation brings us to the role NEHA must play in preparing and leading our profession into this time of great change. Our association must continue to be the source of relevant training and education, as well as state-of-the-art practices and imple-

mentations that can be applied by environmental health practitioners.

NEHA is in the midst of member services changes that will offer our membership a greater return on investment (ROI) and current topical training, education, and certifications for the traditional environmental health practitioner, as well as for the allied environmental health professional. NEHA staff are developing resources and capacity to support our membership with technical, managerial, and operational assistance.

NEHA is expanding our presence in Washington, DC, with federal agencies, elected officials, and the “movers and shakers” that affect and influence the practice of environmental health on federal, state, and local levels. It is through this DC presence that we can turn the conversation of our profession forward and upward.

NEHA must also seek out and welcome nontraditional environmental health practitioners—those that work in industry, hospital and other medical settings, and environmental health and safety. This expansion will enable NEHA to be more inclusive of all environmental health aspects and practices. The formation of our new Business and Industry Affiliate is a good first step for NEHA becoming the foremost voice of environmental health.

As the workforce changes and more Baby Boomers leave our profession and younger generations enter, NEHA has to make itself attractive to newer practitioners. Our current outreach to students is a first step. We must follow this outreach with flexible and interactive training and education that is applicable to field, managerial, and laboratory profes-

sionals. Our ever-expanding opportunities for education, certification, and registration, along with our membership ROI, is the beginning of an ongoing process.

Finally, easy access to NEHA for our practitioners, elected officials, and other stakeholders is vital to our organization. NEHA's

nationally elected officers, regional vice-presidents, management, and staff strive to be accessible to answer questions, hear concerns, and initiate actions.

Our profession and NEHA are entering a period of unparalleled opportunity. Together we can not only adapt and survive, but expand

upward and outward to be the voice of environmental health, nationally and internationally.

It is my honor to be your president, a responsibility that I take very seriously. 🐼

David E. Riggs

davidriggs@comcast.com

## Did You Know?

You can share your comments regarding the columns written by NEHA's president and executive director. Our "The Voice of NEHA" blog site at [www.neha.org/membership-communities/get-involved/blog](http://www.neha.org/membership-communities/get-involved/blog) gives you the opportunity to voice your opinion, start a conversation, or share further information about the topics and ideas covered in these columns.

# SUPPORT THE NEHA ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

The NEHA Endowment Foundation was established to enable NEHA to do more for the environmental health profession than its annual budget might allow. Special projects and programs supported by the foundation will be carried out for the sole purpose of advancing the profession and its practitioners.

Individuals who have contributed to the foundation are listed below by club category. These listings are based on what people have actually donated to the foundation—not what they have pledged. Names will be published under the appropriate category for one year; additional contributions will move individuals to a different category in the following year(s). For each of the categories, there are a number of ways NEHA recognizes and thanks contributors to the foundation. If you are interested in contributing to the Endowment Foundation, please call NEHA at 303.756.9090. You can also donate online at [www.neha.org/donate](http://www.neha.org/donate).

*Thank you.*

### DELEGATE CLUB (\$25–\$99)

Name in the Journal for one year and endowment pin.

#### Richard W. Mitzelfelt

Edgewood, NM

### HONORARY MEMBERS CLUB

(\$100–\$499)

Letter from the NEHA president, name in the Journal for one year, and endowment pin.

#### Gavin F. Burdge

Lemoyne, PA

#### Gary E. Coleman, RS, CP-FS, DAAS

Lilburn, GA

#### Alicia Collins, REHS

Lilburn, GA

#### Carolyn Harvey, PhD, CIH, RS, DAAS, CHMM

Richmond, KY

#### Tim Hatch, MPA, REHS

Montgomery, AL

#### Adam E. London, RS, MPA

Grand Rapids, MI

#### Lynne Madison, RS

Hancock, MI

#### Ned Therien, MPH

Olympia, WA

### 21st CENTURY CLUB (\$500–\$999)

Name submitted in drawing for a free one-year NEHA membership, name in the Journal for one year, and endowment pin.

#### Bob Custard, REHS, CP-FS

Lovettsville, VA

#### David T. Dyjack, DrPH, CIH

Denver, CO

#### Bette J. Packer

Ham Lake, MN

#### Peter M. Schmitt

Shakopee, MN

#### LCDR James Speckhart, MS

Silver Spring, MD

### SUSTAINING MEMBERS CLUB

(\$1,000–\$2,499)

Name submitted in drawing for a free two-year NEHA membership, name in the Journal for one year, and endowment pin.

#### James J. Balsamo, Jr., MS, MPH, MHA, RS, CP-FS

Metairie, LA

#### George A. Morris, RS

Dousman, WI

### AFFILIATES CLUB

(\$2,500–\$4,999)

Name submitted in drawing for a free AEC registration, name in the Journal for one year, and endowment pin.

#### Vince Radke, MPH, REHS, CP-FS, DAAS, CPH

Atlanta, GA

### EXECUTIVE CLUB AND ABOVE

(\$5,000–\$100,000)

Special invitation to the AEC President's Reception, name in the Journal for one year, and endowment pin.