



WSEHA NEWSLETTER

WASHINGTON STATE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Volume 56 No. 2

Spring 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Tom Kunesh

Dear WSEHA Colleagues,

A few weeks ago as the spectre of Covid-19 loomed on the horizon, a few colleagues and I were talking about what it all might mean for the Environmental Health profession. My smart-aleck response quoted the warning you see as you enter your favorite roller coaster: "Fasten your safety belts, keep your hands and feet inside the car, and do not try to exit until the ride has come to a complete stop." I have kept this image in my mind as we respond both professionally and personally to this pandemic.

The Good News: Environmental Health professionals wear many hats when things are "normal." Even if we work in a single program area, we play many roles: Scientist, investigator, educator technical expert, diplomat, problem solver. Our profession demands that we continue to learn and to grow. Our training has prepared us to be flexible. Many of us have recently been called into roles we are unaccustomed to. I have watched as my colleagues here and around the state shine in this moment of crisis like guiding stars on a clear night.

I hope you all take a moment to appreciate the historic event we are a part of. I am humbled to be a part of this profession.

When Bad Things Happen to Good People: While we've been stepping up to respond, our 2020 Annual Education Conference has fallen victim to Covid. I am truly heartbroken because your AEC Planning Committee had pulled together a fantastic agenda, great plenary speakers, interesting field trips, and a series of fun social and networking activities. The planning committee (next page) consists of many colleagues who made many promises and kept every one of them.

The Great News: I've got my sights set on Tacoma again in 2022. However, before we talk about 2022, there is really exciting news to report for 2021. NEHA is bringing its annual education conference to Spokane July 12–15, 2021 at the Spokane Convention Center and The Davenport Grand Hotel. WSEHA just signed a memorandum of understanding with NEHA to collaborate on conference planning. Here are some highlights:

- WSEHA will plan two full educational tracks with Washington content
- WSEHA members will receive a steep discount - \$450.00 for full conference registration, \$260.00 single day registration
- WSEHA IHC silent auction, WSEHA awards, WSESHA annual meeting and WSBRS annual meeting will occur as usual
- NEHA plans, organizes, and pays for all conference facilities

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Publications Committee—Anne Moen
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International Health Committee—Ashlee-Rose Ferguson
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Like [WSEHA's Facebook page!](#) Stay up-to-date [with](#) new educational events, job postings, and goings-on in the field of Environmental Public Health.

Another way to keep up with what we're doing is to join our mailing list. Go to wseha.org to join the mailing list or email Megan McNelly at megan@wseha.org.

Next Newsletter Deadline:

AUGUST 2020

The Washington State Environmental Health Association Newsletter is the official publication of WSEHA. Membership in WSEHA includes a subscription to the newsletter. Membership in WSEHA is not required for acceptance of articles in the newsletter.

Opinions expressed in articles published in the WSEHA newsletter should not be accepted necessarily as statements of policy or opinions of WSEHA.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: continued

This means no separate WSEHA AEC in Spring of 2021. However, we'll still need speakers and committee members to keep up our end of the bargain. Stay tuned for more information...the call for papers for NEHA 2021 will go out in August 2020.

Until I see you all again...take care.

Tom Kunesh, WSEHA President

See page 6 to see how you can volunteer for the 2021 AEC in Spokane!

Speaker Committee

Anna Fretheim, DOH

Susan Shelton, DOH

Nancy Bernard, DOH

Megan McNelly, WSEHA

Greg Tanbara, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD)

Facilities Committee

Jerry Caird, TPCHD

Rob Eastman, Chelan-Douglas Health District

Marketing Committee

Shawn Ultican, Ecology

Student Coordinator Committee

Tania Busch-Isakson, UW

Emily Hovis, DOH

Social Committee

Jodie Holdcroft, Kitsap Public Health District

Greg Tanbara, TPCHD

Publications Committee

Dayna Katula, Kitsap Public Health District

Conference Chair

Jamie Zorich

Awards Committee

Larry French, DOH- retired

James Rivard, Ecology

Joe Graham, DOH

Chuck Treser, Retired- University of Washington

International Health Committee

Ashlee-Rose Ferguson, WSDA

Moderator Committee

Randy Freeby, DOH

Jeremy Simmons, DOH

Registration Committee

Rob Eastman, Chelan-Douglas Health District

Megan McNelly, WSEHA

Audio/Visual Committee

Laura Homan, DOH

Lynn Schneider, Public Health- Seattle & King County

WSEHA Representatives

Megan McNelly, WSEHA Executive Secretary – the glue that holds us together!

Tom Kunesh, Whatcom County Health Department

Mike Young, Snohomish Health District

WSEHA 2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS—Announced on ZOOM

Larry French – AEC Awards Committee Chair

Despite COVID-19, the AEC Awards and Scholarship Committee wants to honor our 2020 recipients for their outstanding work in our field of Environmental Health. We are very proud of these individuals and feel lucky to have them in our Association. For information on each of these, please use [this link](#) from our WSEHA webpage and to preview the ZOOM Awards ceremony go [here](#).

Thank you to the Awards Committee members Dayna Katula, James Rivard, Chuck Treser, to our WSEHA Board Tom Kunesh, Mike Young, Nancy Bernard and Jodie Holdcroft, and WSEHA’s Secretary, Megan McNelly without whose help the awards would not have happened.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD: BRENNA HOPPE, Snohomish Health District

Nominated by Zach Christopher who shared – “Since beginning her work with Snohomish Health District, Brenna Hoppe has shown incredible drive, passion, and commitment to the community we serve, and to the betterment of the food safety program. Daily, she brings a positivity that is contagious, a curiosity that keeps her engaged, and a team-oriented posture, always ready to help her colleagues when needed. And in a field that is far from black and white, she navigates through the grey with great professionalism. As a colleague of mine once said of Brenna’s overall performance, “She gets it.” Currently, she is leading Snohomish Health District’s efforts to partner with hunger relief organizations to ensure our most vulnerable populations are served safe food, and that our community knows how they can support these organizations. Brenna has a bright future in public health, and we are lucky to have her on our team.” Congratulations Brenna!



JACK B HATLEN PRESIDENT’S INSPIRATIONAL AWARD: ASHLEE-ROSE FERGUSON, WSDA & IHC Chair

To quote WSEHA President Tom Kunesh—“Some people just know how to set other people’s minds at ease. Ashlee-Rose Ferguson has been one of those people for all of the years she has chaired the International Health Committee - the IHC. She has taken on one of the most time-consuming jobs within our organization each year, the IHC Chair, and made sure that the Board of Directors did not have to worry a bit.

You see the IHC Chair does far more than plan the annual silent auction and raffle. Those events alone take hours and hours of planning, setup, volunteer coordination, donation solicitation, room arrangement, and financial management.

That’s only part of the job. The IHC Chair also solicits proposals from non-profits, coordinates the review of applications for funding, liaisons with project managers, arranges for AEC presentations, and tracks progress reports from previous recipients to report back to the Board and to WSEHA membership. These tasks require a leader who can keep track of many important tasks simultaneously. Often, it takes a whole



WSEHA 2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS continued

team to accomplish so many things. Ashlee-Rose has done much of this work single handedly. True, “it takes a village” to run the auction and many people contribute. However, someone must ‘build the village’ and that’s where Ashlee-Rose shines. She leads in a calm, capable, confident manner – letting those around her know that when she promises to do something, she delivers.” Bravo Ashlee-Rose!!

JOHN NORDIN OUTSTANDING SANITARIAN AWARD: HOLLY ERDMAN, Kittitas County Public Health Dept

In his nomination, Jesse Cox wrote – “Holly Erdman is one of these extraordinary sanitarians. Holly has worked as an Environmental Health Specialist for Kittitas County Public Health for thirty-one years.

Holly loves her job, and it shows in everything she does. She has served as a mentor to dozens of environmental health professionals and students throughout her career. It’s not just Holly’s professional expertise that has her peers turning to her for guidance, but also the sheer joy that she exudes while teaching public health concepts. She is a valuable resource to all at her agency including the Health Officer Dr. Mark Larson, who stated ‘Holly has been a wealth of information for me for many things related to Environmental health. She has been my go-to person for water and has been an invaluable resource regarding our transition to water banking and understanding complex water law.’



After three decades in the field, Holly has witnessed changes in code, policy, science, technology, funding, personnel, and leadership. Where others see a challenge, Holly sees opportunity.” Well done Holly!

CIND M. TRESER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP: TIANAI “SCYLER” LI , University of Washington

“After graduation, I hope to work for a few years in the Seattle area to gain some insights into working in the field while continuing to explore my interest in environmental public health. I hope to work in the communicable disease area and look at how to minimize disease transmission between people and the environment. During my time as an undergraduate student, I have established meaningful connections with professionals in King County as well as researchers at the University of Washington through classes and projects. Last summer I did an internship with Environmental Health and Safety at University of Washington, and worked with the laboratory safety team to survey labs on the university campus. During that time, I met principle investigators who are working in different fields, and reflected on how they can work together to further public health. As a co-chair of the Student Environmental Health Association, I have organized activities including site visits, professional development mentorship programs, and social events. In the planning stage, I was privileged to meet and talk with many people working as environmental health and safety specialists, as well as sanitarians. Having the opportunity to talk with these people deepened my desire to work in Washington state. My short-term goal is to get an internship this summer with King County Public Health or a non-governmental organization such as PATH to explore health emergency surveillance and prevention in the greater Seattle area. I will be able to use knowledge I have learnt in class and apply them to problems that I will encounter during the internship.” Our best to you, Scyler!



Volunteers Requested: 2021 AEC

WSEHA is joining with NEHA to hold an AEC in Spokane! (See the page 1 for details.) We would love to have your help! If you're not going to be attending, there's pre-AEC work to do. See the colored blocks for a brief (and incomplete) list of duties for each committee.. (Volunteers will be responsible for their registration fees, if attending.)

The AEC Planning Committee usually meets monthly via conference call for 1-1.5 hours. The time and day of the calls will depend upon the availability of the committee members.

International Health Committee

- ⇒ **Pre-AEC: solicit donations for silent auction and raffle**
- ⇒ **@ AEC: staff the auction room and assist with the raffle**

2021 Timeline (tentative)

Moderator Committee

- ⇒ **@ AEC: moderate sessions**

August 2020
1st Planning Committee meeting
Call for Papers/Proposals

September & October 2020
Planning Committee meetings

November 2020
4th Planning Committee meeting
Proposal submittal deadline

December 2020
5th Planning Committee meeting
Speaker list sent to NEHA

January 2021
6th Planning Committee meeting
Call for Nominees (Board, Award, Scholarships)
IHC begins soliciting donations, if not yet started

Nominations & Awards Committee

- ⇒ **Pre-AEC: encourage nominations and select the slate of nominees**

February— April 2021
Planning Committee meetings?

Speaker Committee

- ⇒ **Pre-AEC: prepare the schedule of speakers**
- ⇒ **Pre-AEC: solicit proposals**

May 2021
Planning Committee meeting?
Deadline for Nominations and Awards

July 2021
AEC in Spokane!

WSEHA BOARD UPDATES

Central Region
VP: James Rivard

Adams
Benton
Cheland
Columbia
Douglas
Grant
Franklin
Kittitas
Klickitat
Okanogan
Walla Walla
Yakima

Northwest Region
VP: Vacant

Island
King
San Juan
Skagit
Snohomish
Whatcom

Olympic Region
VP: Jodie Holdcroft

Clallam
Jefferson
Kitsap
Mason

Eastern Region
VP: Ben Stone

Asotin
Ferry
Garfield
Lincoln
Pend Orielle
Spokane
Stevens
Whitman

Southwest Region
VP: Jeremy Simmons

Clark
Cowlitz
Grays Harbor
Lewis
Pacific
Pierce
Skamania
Thurston
Wahkiakum

The WSEHA board meets a few times a year via conference call with the annual Business meeting usually occurring during the AEC. Meeting minutes can be found on the WSEHA website under About or by using [this link](#).

Recent Board action:

- NEHA Memorandum of Understanding re: 2021 NEHA: The Board authorized Tom Kunesh, President, to negotiate the agreement with NEHA. The Board reviewed the agreement and authorized Tom to sign, pending minor corrections.
- 2020 AEC cancellation: The Board voted to cancel the 2020 AEC in Tacoma.
- Board Nominations and Elections: The Board voted to extend the terms of the current Board members since no nominees were received during the nomination period and the annual in-person Board meeting was cancelled. All officers agreed to extend their terms until the annual meeting.
- UW SEHA affiliate: The Board voted to send a letter of support for the University of Washington Student Environmental Health Association's application to NEHA.

Board members are listed on page two of every newsletter. If you ever have any concerns or questions, we have a great panel of Vice-Presidents and Board members. We'd love to hear from you!



*Renew your
membership!*

Don't forget to continue to renew your membership! We, as always, appreciate your support. Without you, we could not continue to operate as an organization.

Questions about membership? Visit [here](#) for information on how to apply and the different membership categories.

NORTHWEST REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

Do you like your work? Do you like your occupation? Most people in Environmental Health would probably say yes. You likely went to school either studying this profession, or studying a science that fits into this multidiscipline occupation. I've liked this occupation because it is diverse and always changing. If Environmental Health has been good to you. Now there is an opportunity for you to give back, by being part of the leadership in a professional organization.

The **Washington State Environmental Health Association** is seeking to fill the **Northwest Regional Vice President** position. As a VP you will be representing Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, & Whatcom counties at WSEHA board meetings. This is your chance to lead your fellow Environmental Health Specialist into the next decade, helping to make decisions that affect us all. Let me know if you are interested in being nominated or visit [here](#) to submit an application.

Mike Young
WSEHA Past President
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425.551.8954

DONATION OPPORTUNITY—HELP ANIMALS INDIA

The WSEHA Board has voted to provide a donation to Help Animals India, 2020 IHC recipient, in place of the Silent Auction and Raffle. They will match all donations up to \$2,100! A minimum donation of \$1500 will be provided. Help us max out the matching fund opportunity! Receipts will be provided.

The funds provided will go to rabies vaccinations. It has been estimated that 36% of rabies deaths worldwide occur in India (WHO). Help Animals India helps by providing funds to local organizations who use the funds for projects such as vaccinations, spaying/neutering, and education.

More information, including project descriptions and financials, can be found at their [website](#).

To donate, visit the [WSEHA IHC page](#). By using the Donate button on this page, the funds are earmarked for this project. Checks are also accepted—mail to the address on page 2 and indicate that the funds are for the IHC fundraiser.

**DONATE BY JULY 4TH TO HAVE YOUR
DONATION COUNT TOWARD THE
MATCH!**

