



WSEHA NEWSLETTER

WASHINGTON STATE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Volume 60 No. 2

Summer 2024

President's Message

Dear colleagues,

Two months after the fabulous 2024 Annual Education Conference in Yakima, I am still thinking about the conversations I had with many of you. The networking was epic, whether it was happening in the hallways in between sessions, or during meals and social events. I felt recharged hearing about the many ways, big and small, our communities were bettered by your professional efforts during this past year. Whether talking with one person about the benefits of hand washing, or searching for solutions to PFAS in community water supplies, what you all do everyday is impactful. Those who live in Washington State deserve to live, learn, work, and play in an environment that will support their health.

One sanitarian, whose lengthy career has been of relentless advocacy for a safe environment for our children, retired this month. Nancy Bernard is trusting us to continue her efforts of supporting and educating the educators, helping them understand the value of soap and water vs sanitizer and air fresheners in schools, leaving both hands and the air cleaner. She was also a leader amongst her peers and put many hours in towards the betterment of WSEHA. Nancy, it is my privilege to speak for the association and to say a sincere "Thank you!" and hope you enjoy your retirement.

We have secured the location for the 2025 Annual Education Conference and this fall will start the planning efforts it. Over 30 association members worked last year, combining a few hours here and there to culminate in an event which we hope many of you found rewarding to attend. For 2025, there are plenty of opportunities to add your efforts and interest. I challenge those on the west side to volunteer and help plan an AEC that is as stellar as 2024's Yakima conference.

Stay cool and safe this summer. High-heat conditions and wildland fire smoke will be impacting our communities, as well as your daily efforts in the field. The public expects to enjoy all the deep-fried everything at fairs and to be safe, even in overcrowded pools. So back at it, knowing that what you do matters.

Sammy Berg

Lost Items:

If you lost a pair of sunglasses and/or a thermoflask, please email megan@wseha.org with the description so we can get the items back to you!

Save the Date
2025 AEC - SUQUAMISH RESORT
APRIL 28-30, 2025

WSEHA Mailing Address & Contact Information

PO Box 721, South Bend, WA 98586
Website: www.wseha.org
Ph: 360.875.8058, F: 360.989.3997
Executive Secretary: Megan McNelly
megan@wseha.org

WSEHA Board of Directors

President - Sammy Berg

360.867.2568
Sammy.berg@doh.wa.gov

President Elect - Jeremy Simmons

360.236.3346
Jeremy.simmons@doh.wa.gov

Immediate Past President – Susan Shelton

360.236.2650
susan.shelton@doh.wa.gov

Secretary - Jennifer Garcelon

360.417.2347
jgarcelon@co.clallam.wa.us

Treasurer - Jesse Smith

360.414.5599 x6442
smithj@co.cowlitz.wa.us

Central Regional Vice President - James Rivard

509.457.7123
jriv461@ecy.wa.gov

Eastern Regional Vice President—Vikki Barthels

509.324.1475
vbarthels@srhd.org

Northwest Regional Vice President - Ethan Schmidt

(360) 370-7521
ethans@sanjuanico.com

Olympic Regional Vice President - Heather Watts-Goodfellow

heather.watts-goodfellow@doh.wa.gov

Southwest Regional Vice President—Katie Lott

klott@tpchd.org

WSEHA Committee Chairs

Nominations and Awards Committee—Emily Hovis

ehovis@uw.edu

Publications Committee—VACANT

International Health Committee – Layken Winchester

Layken.winchester@kitsappublichealth.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1
NEHA Update & WSEHA Board	3
International Health Committee	4
Awards & Scholarships	4-5
2024 AEC Wrap-Up	6



Like [WSEHA's Facebook page](#) ! Stay up-to-date with the 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:

Fall 2024

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.

87 NEHA Annual Educational Conference

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) will be holding our 2024 Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition (AEC) on July 15-18 in Pittsburgh, PA. We have a great line-up of speakers this year and this promises to be one of our best conferences yet!

Our theme this year is New Horizons: Building Bridges to Shape the Environmental Health Future, focusing on responding to the needs of the profession with new topics like heat waves in the U.S., data modernization, burn-out, and artificial intelligence for environmental health, along with our traditional topics such as food safety and water quality.

To find out more about the agenda, speakers, and to register for the conference go to the NEHA website at <https://www.neha.org/aec>

Hope to see you there,

Bill Emminger
Region 1 Vice President
bemminger@neha.org
541.497.0216

New Board Members



**Katie
Lott**

I'm excited to be part of the Washington State Environmental Health Association Board of Directors representing the southwest region. I'm thankful for the opportunity to work with the board and our mem-

bers. This work provides educational and training opportunities, promotes workforce development and enhances environmental health efforts across the state.

I've worked in public health for 27 years. The last 18 years with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department in a variety of environmental health roles. In my current position as the Environmental Health Assistant Division Director, I'm grateful to work with all our programs and partner agencies.

Feel free to reach out with questions or just to say hello!

Katie
klott@tpchd.org

**Heather
Watts**



My name is Heather Watts, and I am excited for the opportunity to serve on the WSEHA Board. I started working in environmental public health in 2019 when I joined Clallam County Environmental Health as an Environmental Health Specialist. I joined the Washington State Department of Health in 2021 and currently serve as the On-Site Septic Program Supervisor. I have degrees in biology and public health, and I love melding the two together. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family. We hang out with our chosen WA family, cook, work in our garden, and travel every chance we get. When I find a morsel of quiet time to myself, I like to read.

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

THANK YOU to everyone who donated, participated, and supported this year's IHC silent Auction and Raffle to support Clean Water for Haiti.

With your support, IHC was able to raise over \$2600.00 to provide affordable access to clean water in Haitian homes!

We can't wait to see you in the IHC room next year. There will be more fun, more competition (with a NEW prize category), and a new recipient to support. Until then, look out for updates on the [IHC Webpage](#) and in future newsletters.

The IHC would like to recognize the following people and organizations who donated to this year's silent auction and raffle:

- ▶ Department of Health
- ▶ Whatcom County HCS
- ▶ ThermoWorks
- ▶ Public Health-Seattle & King County
- ▶ Kitsap Public Health District
- ▶ Jodie Holdcroft
- ▶ Clean Water for Haiti
- ▶ Thurston County
- ▶ Emily Hovis



SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

Student Scholarships

The Cind M. Treser Memorial Student Scholarship program (formerly the Ed Pickett Memorial Student Scholarship) gives recognition to outstanding and deserving undergraduate students majoring in Environmental Health (or in an allied discipline) and who intend to take employment in the field of Environmental Health in Washington State upon completion of the baccalaureate degree requirements.

In 2024 we had many excellent applicants for this scholarship, which made selection of our scholarship recipients challenging. For this reason we are delighted to award two student scholarship recipients. Each of these individuals has demonstrated exceptional drive and commitment to their education, often in the face of significant challenges. They've juggled rigorous coursework, extracurricular activities, and personal responsibilities with grace and determination. These scholars represent the next generation of environmental health leaders, innovators, and change-makers who will go on to make a profound impact on their communities and the world and we are delighted to support them through this scholarship:



- **Anysiah Taylor** is a student at the University of Washington, where she is pursuing a BA in Public Health-Global Health and anticipates graduating in June 2024. Upon graduation she is interested in public policy and improving population health by fostering community engagement and advocating for equitable, research-based practices.

- **Ziyun (Noel) Xia** is a student at the University of Washington, where she is pursuing a BA in Public Health-Global Health and anticipates graduating in June 2024. Upon graduation, she is interested in working to solve environmental health-related challenges at a public health department or community organization.



Awards

As environmental health professionals, we are sometimes described as a “hidden profession.” We work behind the scenes as guardians of our air, water, and land, tirelessly advocating for policies and practices that promote sustainability, mitigate pollution, and protect public health. Our work is difficult, and often thankless. It is important to not only recognize the important work we do as a profession, but also to recognize the individuals among us that go above and beyond everyday to keep our communities safe.



We currently have four awards: the John Nordin Outstanding Sanitarian Award, the Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award, the Rookie of the Year award, and the Jack Hatlen President’s Award. WSEHA has been recognizing award recipients since 1962, and the list of professionals who have received these awards is quite significant (see the award recipient list [here](#))! This year we were delighted to recognize the following environmental health professionals:

- John Nordin Outstanding Sanitarian: **Bill Angel** from Whatcom Health Department
- Rookie of the Year Award: **Maddy Lucas** from Whitman County Health Department
- Jack B. Hatlen Presidents Award: **Katie Lott** from Tacoma Pierce County Health Department

Recognition of good work is important to us, and we encourage you to consider nominating a deserving individual for next year. We can only recognize those who have been nominated, so please submit your nominees for the 2025 AEC! Additional information can be found in the Awards Manual and on the [WSEHA Awards webpage](#).



Bill Angel



Maddy Lucas



2024 AEC WRAP UP

AEC 2024 – That's a wrap!

Thank you to all who attended the 75th annual AEC conference, making it the largest attendance on the east side! For those who missed this year, we hope to see you in 2025 at the Suquamish Resort April 28 – 30.

Here's a few highlights from this year:

- Over 322 environmental health professionals attended.
- Inspiring plenary sessions, a variety of educational presentations and field trips.
- You helped International Health Committee raise over \$2900.00 for Clean Water for Haiti.
- An evening full of laughter while connecting with new and old friends at Bale Breaker.



An enormous thank you to the hard working and dedicated group of over 40 volunteers, including students, none of this would have been possible without you! The thoughtful planning of the committee and outstanding presenters made the conference a huge success!

Check out all the [great presentations](#) from this year.

Share your feedback and let us know how we can make 2025 even better – [2024 AEC evaluation](#). We are reviewing your feedback carefully and excited to incorporate your ideas.

The planning committee work begins again soon. We welcome new volunteers and new ideas to help make 2025 a great opportunity to learn, network and have a bit of fun.

E-mail Megan McNelly, megan@wseha.org and join our great planning group.

Thanks again to all the attendees and those involved in the making! We'll see you in 2025!

Katie and Anne

<https://www.wseha.org/2024-annual-education-conference>

