Message from the President - David Fridley

What Can We Do For You?

Thank you for your continued support of VEHA as we enter our 57th year of working to advance the mission and interests of the hundreds of public and private sector environmental health professionals working in Virginia.

As we move forward, we want to make sure that this volunteer organization is doing its best possible job to provide you with useful information, tools, and development opportunities for your career.

We also work to promote the growth and recognition of all of you, taken as a diverse group.

Providing education, issue advocacy, scholarships, professional recognition, and networking are all key activities for VEHA. Will you take five minutes or less to take the following three-question survey? It will help us guide VEHA in the future to be the best fit for your 21st century needs.

Thank you very much for taking just a few minutes to provide us with feedback here: https://qfreeaccountssjc1.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7U4bga2YwU8q0Ye .
Membership
VP of Member Services - Jessica Stewart

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage those who are not currently active members of VEHA to become members. VEHA is a great association for your professional development in environmental health. Members are provided with opportunities for professional education and advancement, a chance to network with other environmental professionals and public officials across the state and region, and work to improve public health. Members also receive discounts on VEHA sponsored conferences and credentialing opportunities. Joining VEHA is easy and affordable! Simply go to our website www.virginiaeha.org and click the “Join VEHA” icon then follow the instructions to get started.

Scholarships & Awards
VP of Professional Advancement - Leon Vinci

As Vice President of Professional Advancement for VEHA, I attend the monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss business and the ongoing success of the organization. As we continue to come-out of Covid-19 (and any new variants in future months), we are hard at work to develop our numerous VEHA educational conferences and meetings, while we all keep being safe and working together. A great meeting is set for this coming June.

As always, I encourage fellow environmental health professionals and students to become members of the VEHA organization and take advantage of the trainings and the awards that will be helpful for current and future endeavors. Further, our members should visit the VEHA website to gather an increased understanding of the great opportunities available through the Association.

It is a great opportunity to work with the VEHA organization and I encourage any professionals and students interested in scholarships and awards to reach out through our VEHA Board email to the Vice President of Professional Advancement: board@virginiaeha.org.

VEHA Educational Scholarship: Each spring VEHA solicits undergraduate and graduate students in the Environmental Health field of study to submit their applications for the annual VEHA Educational Scholarship. This scholarship is currently funded at $1000.00 and is awarded to the most qualified applicant. Application deadline is June 10, 2023. To apply, visit VEHA’s Scholarships-Awards page.
Members, if you have a college in your jurisdiction, be sure to remind them that the deadline for our Educational Scholarship applications is fast approaching.

**Annual Awards for Outstanding Service:**

Each year we recognize deserving environmental health professionals for several awards presented by the VEHA. These honors include the Environmental Heath Professional of the Year and the A. Clarke Slaymaker Award.

Another accolade that we present is the NEHA Certificate of Merit award. NEHA—the National Environmental Health Association—issues a special award to deserving recipients (and special program activity) with a nomination by the VEHA.

Every NEHA state affiliate is invited to designate an individual and/or a team of its members to receive a Certificate of Merit, thereby nationally recognizing one of their own for outstanding contributions to the profession of environmental health. Recipients are recognized during NEHA’s Annual Education Conference awards program and in the Journal of Environmental Health. This is an opportunity for special recognition of one of our own members in front of a national audience.

Last year, Dr. Mona Sarfaty received the prestigious A Clarke Slaymaker honor. She hails from the northern Virginia area. Among her very long list of accomplishments over the years, she spearheaded (what is now an international movement) wherein Doctors now understand Climate Change, not only as the major Environmental Health issue, but, also link it to the health needs of their patients when giving care. Across the US, her efforts have generated a nation-wide coalition of physicians working to address Climate issues and improving the environment.

It is now time to consider submitting nominations for these awards for this year. Consider your co-workers and other professionals for recognition of their hard work, service, and contributions to environmental health. Do it today!

To apply for the Educational Scholarship or any Awards, please visit VEHA’s Scholarships-Awards page.
VEHA News & Save the Dates

Although there is a ‘ton of stuff’ that the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) is doing, here are 2 key updates which impact Environmental Health workers in the Commonwealth. You can always find more information via their monthly professional report: Journal of Environmental Health.

**EH Workforce Act**

NEHA is leading the charge for a new federal law which promotes and enhances the role of the Environmental Health practitioner. It is HR 2661, The Environmental Health Workforce Act.

This special legislation will:

1. Develop model standards and guidelines for credentialing
2. Create the environmental health workforce plan
3. Release a report on best practices in our field
4. Add us to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program

The new bill was introduced by Representative Brenda Lawrence (D-MI) and more information about it can be found at: [www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2661](http://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2661).

**Virginia Leaders Helping NEHA**

A special Task Force looking at identifying and chronicling the history of the Environmental Health profession as well as NEHA’s rich history was convened by Past-President Priscilla Oliver of NEHA. She appointed our own Leon F. Vinci, DAAS, RS (Roanoke) and Bob Custard, RS (Richmond) to this esteemed group.

Leon was asked to chair the group and several legends including past-presidents of NEHA (like Bob) sit on the panel. The committee’s mission is a work in progress and they have already achieved several notable accomplishments. Most notably, an active web page on the NEHA national website is open for environmental health workers to view and utilize. You should explore it today at: [www.neha.org/neha-history-project](http://www.neha.org/neha-history-project).
Climate Change Concerns

Of course, no mention of Environmental Health can proceed without a discussion of the present threat of Climate Change and its effects to our planet and to human health.

NEHA has a ‘Climate & Health Committee’ with its own webpage and ongoing Blog. You can sign up for it at any time: just go to the site and get in. Here’s a Blog concerning the recent IPCC Report: https://www.neha.org/membership-communities/get-involved/day-in-life/response-ipcc-report.

Spring is here and it’s time to register for our upcoming Education Day!

This one-day workshop will consist of either an onsite water/waste-water education session or a food safety education session. Attendees must choose the session during the registration process. Continuing education credits will be awarded for attendance.

Interested in attending this event? Register on our website so you don’t miss these great opportunities to learn together and get those CEU’s.

NEHA Annual Educational Conference (AEC) Conference 2023 - NEHA's 2023 Annual Education Conference (AEC) will be held July 31 - August 3 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Interstate Environmental Health Seminar (IEHS) 2023 – September 20 – 22 in Jekyll Island, Georgia. This event will have speakers from many regional states and cover all aspects of environmental health. See Georgia’s Environmental Health Association for registration and details.

VEHA Fall Educational Conference – Save the Date coming soon!