

NEHA NEWS

The *CP-FS Study Guide* is 358 pages and is now available for purchase in the NEHA bookstore at www.neha.org/store. The study guide is priced at \$199 for members and \$229 for nonmembers. You can also find information about the CP-FS credential exam at www.neha.org/cpfs.

COVID-19 Early Care and Education Collaborative Accomplishments

The practice of environmental health plays a vital role in reducing the spread of COVID-19, specifically in the areas of sanitation, disinfection, food safety, and indoor air quality. The need for guidance on safer cleaning practices and how to improve indoor air quality is especially necessary in early care and education (ECE) facilities, where many children spend a majority of their active hours during the day and may be at increased risk for exposure to COVID-19 and other environmental health hazards.

To meet this challenge and provide coordination around ECE-related guidance in the early days of the pandemic, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) provided support to establish the COVID-19 ECE Collaborative in mid-2020. The Collaborative, convened by NEHA, served as a forum to bring together key environmental health organizations, each with their own specialization and constituents, to better coordinate activities and messaging during the beginning of the pandemic before vaccinations were available. Convening a broad range of organizations ensured that messaging was both coordinated and tailored to the ECE community including ECE facilities, home-based child-care settings, clinicians and other healthcare providers, and public health organizations.

Collaborative members worked to identify needs and gaps and developed educational materials, webinars, and trainings on priority topics including safe cleaning, disinfection, food handling, and improving indoor air quality during the early stages of the COVID-19 response. Collaborative members also created tools for engagement and relationship building between ECE facilities and health departments that can be carried on in a post-pandemic environment. This project serves as an example of how collaborative partnerships, utilizing Health in All Policies principles, can be rapidly established and implemented in real time to holistically address public health challenges and protect children's health.

A summary report of the accomplishments of the Collaborative, as well as fact sheets, assessment forms, webinars, videos, infographics, and other resources, can be accessed at www.neha.org/eh-topic/covid-ece-collaborative. The report provides a history of the Collaborative, highlights the coordination and resources created, explores the Collaborative's impact, and includes links to the numerous resources developed.

NEHA Staff Profile

As part of tradition, NEHA features new staff members in the *Journal* around the time of their 1-year anniversary. These profiles give you an opportunity to get to know the NEHA staff better and to learn more about the great programs and activities going on in your association. This month we are pleased to introduce you to one NEHA staff member. Contact information for all NEHA staff can be found on pages 48 and 49.



Nathan Galanos

Prior to autumn 2019, I had never lived a day of my life outside of Southeast Texas. I was ready for a change and ready to challenge myself by doing something bold by moving outside of my comfort zone. Much like my move away from everything I had ever known required boldness on my part, I believe being an environmental health professional also

requires a certain level of boldness to passionately fight for the health, safety, and environment of our communities through our actions, words, and work. It makes me happy to work with people who care about environmental health.

I joined NEHA in September 2021 as a contract administrator in the Finance Department to provide support for NEHA's many federally-funded grants and related third-party contracts. I have a bachelor of arts degree in mass communication—print journalism from the Dan Rather Communications Building at Sam Houston State University.

I first started working with contracts in 2010, preparing civil engineering and architecture contracts for the Harris County Commissioners Court in Houston, Texas. At the Texas A&M Sponsored Research Services Office, I learned the ins and outs of the pre-award process and was thrown into the fire on a number of high dollar proposals. In my time at the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute, I handled cradle-to-grave processes (both pre- and post-award). Sponsors I have worked with in the past include the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Aeronautics and Science Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and many state sponsors.

At NEHA, I assist in preparation of budgets and proposal documents for our sponsored grant applications and input those documents into the grant portal prior to submission. I draft and review numerous third-party contracts and addendums, and track them through execution. I assisted in procuring our new building lease and submitting multiple grant applications. I am currently in the process of developing standard operating procedures for both grants and contracts.

Outside of work I am an avid sports fan, particularly baseball and football. I love to spend time with my wife and daughter out in nature, especially at the beach or in the mountains. 🏞️