

NEHA NEWS

due to the pandemic and local sources aided in keeping food products on the shelves.

Representative Wittman has a particular interest in seafood. As a former seafood inspector for Virginia, he recognizes the importance of safe packaging of meat products and spoke of biofilm on meats that leads to spoilage. Prior to Congress, Representative Wittman worked with the Food and Drug Administration on its seafood hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) program. He was involved with the testing of seafood to learn how norovirus, *Listeria*, or other foodborne pathogens emerge and spread in seafood processing facilities.

Representative Wittman has shown a keen interest in ensuring that the nation's retail food safety system remains safe, well stocked, and provides a wide variety of foods to consumers in the U.S. NEHA looks forward to working with Representative Wittman on future public health and food safety efforts.

NEHA Starts Work to Update the Certified in Comprehensive Food Safety Credential

By Eileen Neison (eneison@neha.org)



The subject matter experts working on the job task analysis for the Certified in Comprehensive Food Safety credential take a moment away from all the hard work to capture a group photo. Photo courtesy of Eileen Neison.

NEHA has begun the process to update and overhaul its Certified in Comprehensive Food Safety (CCFS) credential. The CCFS credential is NEHA's food safety manufacturing credential. The CCFS credential is a mark of distinction for more seasoned food safety professionals who aim to demonstrate expertise in the manufacturing and processing areas, whether in a regulatory or oversight role or in a food safety management or compliance position within the private sector. A CCFS credential holder is prepared to manage and evaluate food safety plans in food manufacturing and processing facilities to assure a safe food supply. They are accomplished in understanding and implementing preventative controls, conducting risk assessments, observing and training staff, assessing the physical facility, and assuring corrective measures are applied to control hazards and prevent foodborne illness.

In mid-April 2022, 12 subject matter experts from around the country flew to the NEHA office in Denver to attend and assist with

the job task analysis of the CCFS credential. A job task analysis is the process of studying a job to determine its activities and responsibilities, qualifications necessary for performance of the job, and conditions under which the work is performed. NEHA is doing a complete overhaul of the CCFS credential and this first step will help us develop a blueprint of basic competencies for someone working in or evaluating food manufacturing. This knowledge will then be used to inform the updates needed for the current CCFS credential exam.

Thank you to our amazing volunteers:

- William "Bill" Barriger, Safety Solutions Group, LLC
- Chirag H. Bhatt, HS GovTech
- Rashelly Bland, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Robert Buckley, Coca-Cola
- Anne Cooper, Eagle
- Martin Guy Ethy, Sodexo
- Jasmine Hagan, First Watch Restaurants
- Taryn Horr (Polera), Exponent
- Angelica Monarrez, Del Sol Food Company
- Steven Simmons, The Ohio State University
- Edward Suttmiller, Stahmann's Pecans
- Terrin Thomas, Coca-Cola

To learn more about the CCFS credential, please visit www.neha.org/ccfs.

NEHA Staff Profiles

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 three NEHA staff members. Contact information for all NEHA staff can be found on pages 48 and 49.



Dillon Loiza

I obtained a degree in economics in 2016 from Colorado State University, which led me to a few different accounting positions and a labor and employment job before coming to NEHA in August 2021 as an accounts payable specialist. My specialization was in international development but over the last few years, I have become very invested in the effects climate change is having on our environment and how to avoid the worst of it.

NEHA's work in environmental health was very appealing to me and I knew that I could help make a difference by joining the team. Now I help manage our financial relationships with vendors and try to keep the flow of funds going as efficiently as possible for NEHA and our many partners.

I also volunteer with climate action groups, such as the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign and Citizens Climate Lobby, to help us transition to a carbon neutral future. I love being outdoors, especially when I am rock climbing or snowboarding. When not outside or volunteering, I spend most of my free time researching alternative energies and energy storage technologies such as iron air batteries. I also enjoy reading lots of science fiction and fantasy. I am currently working through *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and hope that by working with NEHA, I can help prevent any world ending events like we see in the book.



Amber Potts

I became a NEHA member in 2011 when I started my environmental health career. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in chemistry from The University of Texas at Dallas, I was hired by the Garland Health Department as an environmental health specialist. I received my Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian

(REHS/RS) and Certified Professional–Food Safety (CP-FS) credentials from NEHA the following year! Along with doing health inspections, I helped run a mobile laboratory where my team responded to emergency situations of unknown chemical substances. I worked there until 2013 when I temporarily moved to Dubai, United Arab Emirates. On my return to the U.S. in 2014, I went back to work for the Garland Health Department.

In 2019 I became the environmental health supervisor for the Environmental Health & Sustainability Department in Plano, Texas. I assisted a team of eight to navigate through COVID-19 obstacles, provided forward momentum in the department's work on the Food and Drug Administration's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards, and helped host the first Food Safety Summit in Plano. While I thoroughly enjoyed my career at Plano, I was recruited by NEHA in August 2021, where I am a senior project coordinator in food safety.

This position within NEHA has afforded me the opportunity to serve on several committees, including cochair of the Promote Development Team for the Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR) and a voting member for the Conference for Food Protection's (CFP) Allergen Committee. I also get to work on projects such as Epi-Ready, the National Environmental Health Assessment Reporting System (NEARS), and Integrated Food-

borne Outbreak Response and Management (InFORM) Conference. I have recently been accepted into the School of Law at Texas A&M University to pursue a master of jurisprudence in energy and environmental law. I will begin in fall 2022.

I have been trained by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Center for Domestic Preparedness and my favorite training was the CBRNE (i.e., chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive) training at Dugway Proving Ground in Utah. I have conducted thousands of food safety inspections, hundreds of swimming pool inspections, dozens of day care inspections, and a few foster home inspections. I have sprayed miles and miles of roads in the middle of night for vector control, abated numerous stagnant swimming pools, and served as an expert witness in food safety litigations.

I thank Richard Briley, Rachel Patterson, and my friend, the late Jim Dingman, for their support and guidance throughout my career. My love and passion for all things environmental health runs deep.



Alyssa Wooden

I joined NEHA in July 2021 as a project coordinator in Program and Partnership Development. My responsibilities involve managing projects ranging from implementing Health in All Policies programs at state and local health departments to developing an environmental health land reuse training course to improving the use of environmental

health data in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

I am passionate about promoting public health at a community level and advocating for environmental justice and health equity, and my role at NEHA has allowed me to fulfill those passions. Over the past year, I have loved working with public health professionals across the country and helping to provide solutions to some of the most pressing environmental health challenges they face.

Prior to starting at NEHA, I received my bachelor's degree in public health from Johns Hopkins University and a master's in environmental health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. I am originally from the Boston area but have lived in Baltimore, Maryland, for the past 6 years. I love exploring my city's diverse neighborhoods, restaurants, shops, and parks. In my free time you can find me running, cycling, trying new recipes, watching horror movies, or writing short stories. Reach out if you are interested in learning more about NEHA's Health in All Policies work.

Did You Know?

Interested in learning more about our staff? Visit the NEHA Employee Anniversaries page that shares these important milestones of our staff. We have also posted the staff profiles for each staff member listed. Check it out at www.neha.org/about-neha/work-neha/employee-anniversaries.