

NEHA NEWS

NEHA Visits Congress Virtually for Fourth Annual Hill Day

By Doug Farquhar, JD (dfarquhar@neha.org)

For this year's Earth Day on April 22, the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) spread the word about environmental health among the nation's policy makers in Washington, DC. With the COVID-19 pandemic and other restrictions, visiting Congress in person was not an option this year but the NEHA Board of Directors and staff leadership made the trek virtually through Zoom meetings.

NEHA board members and staff have visited Congress each spring since 2017 to talk with senators, representatives, and staff members about the needs and challenges facing the environmental health profession. For past Hill Days, NEHA board members and staff traveled to Washington, DC, to meet with these individuals in person, allowing for a more personal setting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Hill Day 2020 was canceled. For 2021, NEHA decided to transition the event to a virtual platform, which provided some advantages compared with past Hill Day events.

The fourth annual Hill Day allowed NEHA to meet with 44 Congressional offices to discuss the environmental health profession, federal funding of environmental health, and enactment of the Environmental Health Workforce Act (H.R. 2661, www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2661). The visits focused on members of the House and Senate Appropriations committees, both Democrat (NEHA visited 24 offices) and Republican (NEHA visited 18 offices). Beginning early in the morning and lasting into the evening, NEHA board members and staff met with and discussed the challenges facing the profession due to COVID-19, the need for support from the nation's federal policy makers, and the decimation of trained staff due to funding cuts and overwork.

Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence (D-Michigan) spoke with NEHA President Sandra Long, President-Elect Roy Kroeger, Executive Director Dr. David Dyjack, and Government Affairs Director Doug Farquhar, providing her thoughts regarding the profession. As the lead sponsor of the Environmental Health Workforce Act, she was honored to speak with and support NEHA, acknowledging the stresses the workforce is suffering. The Environmental Health Workforce Act would provide much needed training and credentialing nationwide, she commented, and she believes the Act has a good chance of advancing through Congress this year. The bill is still awaiting a Senate companion, which was introduced in previous sessions by Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-Michigan).

Meetings with other offices led to several takeaways. NEHA shared information on the state of the environmental health workforce and profession, discussing how many people our profession touches from food safety to drinking and wastewater to environmental hazards, such as lead and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

NEHA board members and staff shared the following:

- The importance of the environmental health workforce to the nation and each state.
- The introduction of the Environmental Health Workforce Act by Representative Brenda Lawrence.
- The value of federal support to state, tribal, local, and territorial environmental health workforces through funding of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH). Specifically, for the government to provide at least \$322 million to NCEH to ensure all if its programs are adequately funded, including \$93.72 million for the Environmental Health Activities line item that includes \$20.4 million for the All Other Environmental Health Activities subline item.
- The value of federal support for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Specifically, for the government to provide \$93 million for ATSDR in the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2022.
- The value of federal support for food safety programs at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and to appropriate at least \$510 million in FY 2022 toward the food safety needs of FDA.

Certain Congressional offices would only meet with their constituents. As such, NEHA had to recruit Bob Custard and David Riggs, NEHA past presidents, to speak with members from their states (Virginia and Washington, respectively). Jesse Anglesey, president of the Idaho Environmental Health Association, spoke with staff from the office of Representative Mike Simpson (R-Idaho). NEHA member Peggy Mitchell from Delaware spoke with staff from the office of Senator Chris Coons (D-Delaware).

Some NEHA board members had several visits. NEHA President Long had 10 meetings on Hill Day. "I had positive feedback from all that I spoke with. It was a great day filled with energy," commented Long after her meetings. NEHA had seven meetings with Congressional members on Appropriations committees from California. Being from California, Region 2 Vice-President Michele DiMaggio had a busy day. "I learned a lot about representation and I learned a lot about my own capabilities," stated DiMaggio.

"The year's Hill Day demonstrated the value of collaboration among out board, members, and staff in support of our collective efforts to advance our association's mission and secure resources for boots-on-the-ground environmental health professionals," commented Dr. Dyjack.

Conducting Hill Days virtually might be the wave of the future. With security and health restrictions, it is becoming much easier for both Congress and visitors to meet virtually. What we lose in having face-to-face meetings, however, we gain in being able to visit more offices to spread the word about the importance of environmental health.

In total, NEHA spoke to and shared information with 44 members of Congressional Appropriations committees, both from the House and Senate, leaving behind NEHA letters of support and

advocating for the Environmental Health Workforce Act. NEHA set the stage for its fifth annual Hill Day scheduled for spring 2022.

For more information regarding NEHA Hill Day, please contact Doug Farquhar at dfarquhar@neha.org.

Introduction of the Environmental Health Workforce Act

By Doug Farquhar, JD (dfarquhar@neha.org)

The Environmental Health Workforce Act (H.R. 2661) was introduced by Representative Brenda Lawrence (D-Michigan) on April 19, 2021 (www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2661). The act would require the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to:

- Develop model standards and guidelines for credentialing environmental health workers.
- Develop a comprehensive and coordinated plan to develop the environmental health workforce.
- Issue a report on best practices.
- Make credentialed environmental health workers eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

As many NEHA members know, the environmental health profession has seen a significant decrease in workforce capacity since 2008. This public health workforce, second in size only to nursing, is facing challenges to maintain sufficient staff to perform environmental health services. Since 2008, 22% of state and local environmental health jobs have been lost (National Association of County and City Health Officials, 2019). Insufficient staffing has been reported in 64% of state environmental health programs, 60% of local programs, and 67% of tribal programs mainly due to the strain the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the profession (National Environmental Health Association, 2020). Workers express concern regarding insufficient access to training and the high level of burnout. This trend will be exacerbated with the oncoming retirement of the Baby Boom generation.

Funding for environmental health workforce training and retention has decreased. Local health department budgets have either stagnated or decreased in 2019, with over one half of local health departments experiencing a reduction. As this nation struggles with the COVID-19 pandemic, the local public health workforce is strained, with essential environmental health services being neglected as resources are being redirected to the pandemic response.

At present, only 27 states require a credential for environmental health workers. NEHA believes that education and training of existing and new environmental health professionals should be a national public health goal.

“Education and training for new and existing environment health professionals is vital to our national public health. Public health crises, like the Flint water crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, underscore the critical role that the environmental health workforce plays in keeping our communities safe and healthy,”

said Representative Lawrence. “Environmental health workers are more important now than ever before. I’m proud to introduce legislation that invests in and strengthens our environmental health workforce while providing them with the necessary tools and training so they can better serve our country.”

These impacts on the environmental health workforce are occurring in light of the infrastructure bills proposed by the Biden Administration. The laudable goal of these bills is to increase job opportunities for people in the U.S., but at a time when the nation is lacking a sufficient number of trained and certified environmental health workers. The environmental health profession is needed to rebuild drinking water systems; build, renovate, and retrofit housing; and rebuild the transportation network to improve air quality and limit greenhouse gas emissions. Many of the efforts in the proposed bills will be waylaid or incomplete without an adequate and skilled environmental health workforce.

The bill is endorsed by NEHA, the Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs, and the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council. NEHA has drafted a sign-on letter of support to congressional leaders that highlights the importance of this bill. Organizations and individuals can sign-on to the letter online to show their support. Sign-on letters are a way to amplify the impact of the support for this bill. We would appreciate having your support on this important piece of legislation. Please view the sign-on letter and fill out the form at www.neha.org/node/61961 to be included in the list of supporting organizations and individuals.

Through the enactment of the Environmental Health Workforce Act, this nation can ensure that its environmental health workforce is trained, credentialed, and ready to handle the environmental threats that impact public health. For more information regarding the Environmental Health Workforce Act, please contact Doug Farquhar at dfarquhar@neha.org.

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- National Environmental Health Association. (2020). *COVID-19 environmental health workforce needs assessment II report*. <https://emergency-neha.org/covid19/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/COVID-19-EH-Workforce-Needs-Assessment-II-Report.pdf>

FDA Announces New Cooperative Agreement Program to Advance Retail Food Safety

On May 14, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announce that NEHA had been awarded the Advancing Conformance With the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (VNRFRPS) by State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) Retail Food Regulatory Agencies Cooperative Agreement.

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The intended outcome of this cooperative agreement program is to advance the national integrated food safety system by assisting retail food regulatory programs in achieving conformance with VNRFRPS (also called the Retail Program Standards).

The cooperative agreement will also help FDA to leverage NEHA's strengths to assist SLTT retail food programs in their efforts to reduce the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors, implement and attain conformance with the Retail Program Standards, and fully leverage SLTT retail food programs strengths to advance retail food safety. The total funding for the cooperative agreement program is expected to be up to \$40 million over 3 years. The cooperative agreement directly supports FDA's efforts to modernize the nation's retail food protection program under the New Era of Smarter Food Safety.

As part of the 3-year cooperative agreement program, NEHA will work collaboratively with FDA to achieve the following objectives:

- Develop and implement a system to administer financial assistance to SLTT retail regulatory food programs based on the FDA's VNRFRPS flexible funding model.
- Develop and implement a standardized method to assess training needs of retail food regulatory jurisdictions and facilitate meeting those needs.
- Develop and implement a tracking system that quantifies the extent of standardization of regulatory food safety inspection personnel within and among regulatory retail food jurisdictions.

According to NEHA President Sandra Long, REHS, RS, "NEHA is honored to partner with FDA on their revolutionary framework for retail food safety. We are committed to leveraging our association's unique reach and relationship with the local retail food regulatory community as we endeavor to build their capacity to ensure all families across our country enjoy the promise of food free from recognized hazards."

In addition, Laurie Farmer, director of the Office of State Cooperative Programs at FDA, offered her thoughts on the announcement of the new award: "This is a momentous time in the history of retail food protection with FDA providing a significant amount of funding to support SLTT retail programs! This funding model was uniquely designed with our stakeholders and is intended to not only drive behavior change but also measure our progress in reducing foodborne illness at retail in this country. Retail jurisdictions, reach out to your FDA retail food specialist and get yourselves ready to apply for this funding!"

Foodborne illness remains a major public health concern in the U.S. Foodborne diseases cause approximately 48 million illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths each year (Scallan et al., 2011). The annual economic burden from health losses due to foodborne illness is estimated at 77.7 billion dollars (Scharff, 2012). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2016), more than one half of foodborne illness outbreaks that occur each year are associated with food from restaurants or retail food establishments.

Surveillance data from CDC have consistently identified five major risk factors related to food safety practices within the retail food industry that contribute to foodborne illness: poor personal hygiene, improper food holding/time and temperature, contaminated equipment/lack of protection from contamination, inadequate cooking, and food obtained from unsafe sources. Most regulatory retail food inspection programs throughout the U.S. monitor these risk factors in their routine inspections and each necessitates specific food safety behaviors and practices.

The full press release can be viewed at www.neha.org/node/61968. Please visit www.neha.org/retailgrants for more information.

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Task Force on Pandemics: Preparing Buildings and Communities for Disease-Related Threats

Many jurisdictions have already developed guidelines and policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Code Council (ICC) has been tracking these efforts and provides a compilation of resources for the building industry at www.iccsafe.org/coronavirus-response-center.

Due to the complex and nonuniform approaches implemented globally, it is imperative that all aspects of the built environment be thoroughly analyzed to develop a comprehensive response. Recognizing this critical threat to both new and existing construction, ICC and NEHA have established a new task force on pandemics to help communities respond to COVID-19 and prepare for the next health threat.

The design and layout of buildings can have a significant impact on occupant health and safety. This diverse task force will research the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the built environment. The group will then develop a road map and propose needed resources—including guidelines, recommended practices, publications, and updates to the International Codes (I-Codes)—that are necessary to overcome the numerous challenges faced during pandemics to construct safe, sustainable, and affordable structures.

ICC anticipates that the task force will complete:

- A comprehensive review of current code requirements as they relate to prevention of the transmission of diseases and other serious health concerns. Any suggested revisions to current

code requirements based on this assessment will be processed as proposed code changes to the I-Codes.

- A comprehensive review of existing guides, executive orders, white papers, reports, and standards as they relate to design standards, preparedness, health considerations, and tools for operating during a pandemic.
- Identification of best practices and guides to address the design and layout of new and existing buildings.
- A comprehensive package of public information materials.

The new task force will include a broad cross section of experts from the building safety, construction, design, health, and insurance industries. The ICC Board of Directors, in consultation with NEHA, will appoint the members of this task force. More information about the task force can be found at www.iccsafe.org/advocacy/pandemic-taskforce.

NEHA Updates the REHS/RS Study Guide

By Sharon D. Unkart, PhD (sdunkart@neha.org)

Since 1937, NEHA has conferred many credentials and certifications including our flagship credential, the Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS). From 2019 to date, 1,158 NEHA or state REHS/RS exams have been administered, with over 500 exams forecasted for 2021. Currently, there are 3,243 REHS/RS credential holders, with approximately 41% of our members holding this credential or in some stage of acquiring it.

In 2020, NEHA began the process of revising the REHS/RS exam. As part of that process, a new job task analysis was conducted and new exam questions were written utilizing teams of subject matter experts (SMEs) from across the environmental health profession. Outcomes of these processes include a new knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) chart that covers many fields including air, water, waste, vectors, and emergency preparedness. This chart was then used to create the new exam questions that resulted in a revised REHS/RS exam blueprint. These two documents, the KSA chart and the exam blueprint, were then used to guide the next steps in the process.

With the new credentialing exam comes the need for new study materials. Currently, NEHA offers a study guide, *A Guide for Environmental Health Responsibilities and Competencies, 4th Edition*, that was published in 2014 (aka the *REHS/RS Study Guide*). This study guide was the starting point for the revisions that were led by Dr. Sharon D. Unkart, associate director of the Entrepreneurial Zone (EZ) within NEHA. She began with the list of NEHA technical advisors, searching LinkedIn for each person's specialty area within the field of environmental health. From there, she continued searching LinkedIn for current REHS/RS credential holders to fill in the areas that were not covered by the NEHA technical advisors.

Dr. Unkart reached out to the list of 45 potential SMEs via email, of which 16 received no response or were returned

undeliverable. She was thrilled, however, when only five of the remaining 29 professionals from academia, industry, and the regulatory community replied that they could not help. Dr. Unkart then parsed out the chapters based on the specialty areas she had identified using LinkedIn. While most of the SMEs agreed with the initial assessment of their content specialty, a few requested to be moved to a different content area. These changes resulted in some chapters, such as food safety, having as many as four editors. Other chapters, however, were not as well covered by the identified content area specialties.

The lack of coverage on certain chapters left some SMEs with much larger writing assignments. The SMEs were asked for referrals to augment the content area coverage with additional writers. As a result, five individuals were identified and added to the list of SMEs, bringing the final total of editors for the upcoming new edition of the study guide to 29. Some SMEs also volunteered to review more than one chapter, essentially lessening the task for some but increasing it for others.

Each SME was provided with the chapter text from the 4th edition of the *REHS/RS Study Guide*, portions of the KSA chart relevant to their chapter assignment, and the new exam blueprint. From there, their tasks were to

- incorporate the knowledge, skills, and abilities as identified in the job task analysis conducted in 2020;
- revise, edit, update, and add new content as they deemed necessary to bring their chapter current;
- revise and update the references in each chapter; and
- add any new references they felt were important to supporting the updated content of the chapter.

Each SME was given access to the electronic file of the chapter on NEHA's SharePoint (a web-based document management and storage system). This process worked well for many and they were able to make changes directly to the shared files. Some SMEs, however, had trouble using SharePoint, either because they could not access the files or the formatting within their web browser made working with the text difficult. At that point, electronic files of the chapters were emailed to these SMEs, allowing them to track their changes in the files and return the revised files via email to NEHA. The SMEs were given 8 weeks to update the 15 chapters and almost all content revisions were completed by mid-May.

While these revisions were being made to the text, staff members of the EZ creative team were also hard at work. Jaclyn Miller, EZ editor/copy writer, and Seth Arends, EZ graphic designer, worked together to create a new InDesign template that will be used moving forward to publish all NEHA publications. Prior to this process, many of the books published by NEHA are in older, dated file formats that make revising them difficult. This new template will enable EZ to respond to content update needs more quickly, including other publications from NEHA such as

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the *CP-FS Study Guide* and *HACCP: Managing Food Safety Hazards at the Retail Level*.

In appreciation for their service to the profession, each SME was given 10 continuing education contact hours from the NEHA Credentialing Department and a letter of professional service in recognition of their contributions. They will also have their names and biographies listed in the new edition. The new *REHS/RS Study Guide* is expected to be published and available for purchase by late June. Visit www.neha.org/store for more information.

The following is a list of SMEs who contributed to the new edition of the *REHS/RS Study Guide*:

Timothy Callahan	Clint Pinion, DrPH
Tracynda Davis	Richard Pollack, PhD
Derek DeLand, REHS	Jason Ravenscroft, REHS
Zachary Ehrlich, REHS	Cindy Rice, CP-FS
Doug Farquhar, JD	Welford Roberts, PhD
Jason Finley, REHS	Michèle Samarya-Timm, REHS
David Gilkey, PhD	Kari Sasportas, REHS
Stan Hazan	Zia Siddiqi
Greg Kearney, DrPH	Sara Simmonds, REHS
Nichole Lemin, REHS	Christopher Sparks
Adam Mannarino, REHS	Tom Vyles
Cynthia McOliver, PhD	Felix Zemel
Timothy Murphy, PhD	Tyler Zerwekh, DrPH
Crispin Pierce, PhD	Jodi Zimmerman, REHS
Therese Pilonetti, REHS, CP-FS	

New NEHA History Project Webpage

By Kristen Ruby-Cisneros (kruby@neha.org)



In 2020, NEHA President Dr. Priscilla Oliver (2019–2020) appointed a committee to study and review the rich history of NEHA, as well as that of the environmental health profession. In

light of the many advances and new innovations that have occurred in environmental health over the past decades, it is important to examine where we have been and what we have accomplished to position our profession for the future. As such, the NEHA History Project Task Force was created.

The NEHA History Project Task Force is charged with making the important history of NEHA and the environmental health profession available to all NEHA members, as well as other practitioners, students, and the general public. The task force, made up of luminaries from across the environmental health field, convened in March 2020 to assess the history we have recorded, gather data and historical documents, collect historical artifacts, and review records.

In April 2021, the NEHA History Project Task Force launched a webpage—www.neha.org/neha-history-project—to start showcasing its work and the history it has collected. The NEHA History

Project webpage endeavors to preserve our rich history and share our story with all.

From the NEHA History Project webpage you can find an overview of the project and a list of task force members and how to get involved. You can also view the current History in the Spotlight, which highlights the history of NEHA logos. The first logo used by the National Association of Sanitarians (later to be renamed NEHA in 1970) was a shield with a beacon in the center that reflected of the slogan of the association, “Sanitarians—The Beacon Light of Public Health.” The current logo used by NEHA first appeared in the March/April 1975 *Journal of Environmental Health*.

Other NEHA History Project resources highlighted on the webpage include:

- **The NEHA Green Book: A History From 1937 to 1987:** Published in 1987 by NEHA, *Environmental Health 1937–1987, Fifty Years of Professional Development With the National Association of Sanitarians/National Environmental Health Association* (affectionately referred to as the “Green Book”), provides a brief overview of the association’s first 50 years, including its creation, significant events, and past presidents. The book also provides chapters on credentialing, environmental health education, continuing education, *The Sanitarian/Journal of Environmental Health*, awards, women in environmental health, industry, and the American Academy of Sanitarians. To share the history of NEHA’s first 50 years, the NEHA History Project Task Force has digitalized the book for all to access and explore.
- **NEHA Virtual Museum:** You can peruse the NEHA Virtual Museum to learn more about the fascinating artifacts, instrumentation and tools, publications, and miscellaneous items from our past. Over 50 items have been posted to the Virtual Museum. Each item includes a photo and description to help you understand what each item is and how it relates to our profession. View a pin from the first Earth Day in 1970, learn about the use of sidewalk bricks to convey public health messages, and more! The NEHA History Project Task Force thanks Dr. Robert Powitz for providing photos and descriptions from his personal collection for the Virtual Museum.
- **Past NEHA AECs:** The NEHA Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition is the premier environmental health conference that brings together professionals from around the globe to learn and discuss current and emerging environmental health topics and issues. The first AEC was held on June 25, 1937, in Long Beach, California. Since that time, 83 AECs have been held across the U.S., including Hawaii, Alaska, and Canada. A listing of AEC dates has been posted, as well as access to PDFs of AEC wrap-up reports published in the *Journal* from 1980–2019. The task force will continue to update this page with all available AEC reports.
- **NEHA Past Leaders and Award Winners:** A listing of past NEHA presidents, secretaries and executive secretaries, and executive directors can be found on this page. The task force is

currently working on posting information about NEHA award winners in the near future.

- **Notable Figures in Environmental Health:** Still under construction, this part of the webpage will highlight stories of trailblazing individuals who have shaped the environmental health profession.
- **Additional NEHA History Project Resources:** This webpage will enable you to explore more of the resources created and discovered by the task force.

Please visit the NEHA History Project webpage at www.neha.org/neha-history-project to learn more about the task force and to start exploring the rich history of our organization and profession.

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 two NEHA staff members. Contact information for all NEHA staff can be found on page 50.



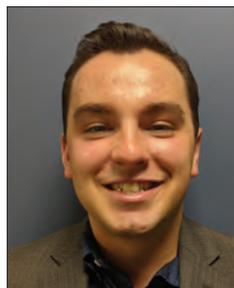
Terryyn Laird

In my role as public health communications specialist at NEHA, I serve primarily as a communications leader in the Retail Food Safety Regulatory Association Collaborative (www.retailfoodsafetycollaborative.org). I maintain the Collaborative's various communication channels and website, provide writing and design support for other

NEHA food safety initiatives both internally and externally, and participate on the Awareness & Communications Workgroup of the Environmental Health & Equity Collaborative.

Before coming to NEHA I worked in retail food at Starbucks and in a nursing home. I also worked as a writing tutor in the Writing Center at Metropolitan State University of Denver. I hold a bachelor of science in human nutrition and a bachelor of art in English from Metropolitan State University of Denver. This varied education provides me with the tools to act as an effective science communicator as well as a storyteller.

I was born and raised in Boulder County, Colorado, and have a deep love for the state and all of the natural beauty here, which fuels my passion for environmental health, conservation, and working to mitigate the effects of climate change. Outside of work I am a collector of hobbies and passions that include (but are not limited to): hiking, camping, backpacking, cooking and baking (currently I am into sourdough and traditional pastry), writing, Dungeons and Dragons, and plants. I'm sure, however, that I will have picked up a few new ones by my next anniversary!



Tyler Linnebur

I joined NEHA in August 2020 as a staff accountant in the Finance Department. My goal is help automate processes and put more data online so that we can work more efficiently and flexibly at home or in the office. I am passionate about the environment and want to contribute to NEHA's mission of advancing environmental health through improv-

ing our finance and accounting functions.

I attended the University of Denver where I obtained my bachelor's degree in finance in 2018 and my master's degree in accounting in 2019. While completing my graduate degree I started working as a staff auditor at a public accounting firm. There I gained experience auditing the financial statements of private corporate, not-for-profit, and governmental clients. I was laid off in May 2020 due to economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic but was fortunate to join NEHA as a contractor in May 2020 and later as a staff accountant in August 2020.

While at NEHA I passed the last of my Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exams and became licensed in December 2020. My goal over the next several years is to pursue the other valuable credentials such as the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) and Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA).

As a staff accountant at NEHA, I record accounting transactions weekly, prepare journal entries and monthly reconciliations of our accounting records, assist in preparing the annual budget and Form 990 tax form, deposit checks, process accounts payable, and perform any other tasks that make the jobs of the accounting manager and finance director easier. I also assist the Partnership and Program Development (PPD) Department at NEHA in preparing its budget and tracking payroll expenses with a sophisticated spreadsheet the PPD director and I have created.

When I am not at work you will find me hiking, camping, mountain biking, running, or doing anything outdoors in my home state of Colorado. I enjoy reading, especially about history and politics, and you can find me discussing either with a group of friends. I also enjoy walking my dog, Cruz, around our neighborhood. Additionally, I run a chapter of the American Conservation Coalition, a free-market environmental organization, and through it go on hikes, do trash cleanups, and hopefully in the near future meet with political leaders to discuss ways to help our environment.

I grew up as a Boy Scout and loved the adventures my troop would go on in the great outdoors. The memories I made sleeping under the stars in the fresh mountain air inspired me to conserve our nature's beauty for future generations to enjoy and make memories of their own. NEHA's work in environmental health is relatively new to me but it has taught me the breadth of environmental health work and how important it is for us all. 🐾