



# MEHA BULLETIN



**President**

**Caleb Johnson**

**Fall/Winter**

**2018/2019 Issue**

**Volume 46, No. 2**

***IN THIS EDITION***

**MEHA 2018**

**Spring & Fall**

**Conference**

**Photos and Award**

**Recipients**

**NEHA Stipend**

**Recipient Article**

**City of**

**Minneapolis**

**Award Recipients**

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## ***President's Message***

***Submitted by Caleb Johnson***

Hello MEHA members,

Rejoice!! We're at least half way through winter and at the head waters of a new year. There are now little peeks of sun when leaving for work in the morning and coming home in the evening. The Winter Carnival and Final Four are just around the corner and then it is full on into spring (with probably a couple dozen inches of snow between now and then).

Just like the seasons, MEHA is continuously changing. First Past President, Nicole Hedeem, will be seeking nominees for board member positions for the 2019-2020 cycle. I encourage you to step up if called upon and take an active role in shaping our profession by serving the members of this organization. We also are continuously seeking fresh faces and new energy on committees so please connect with us if you feel able to help. Our members also continue changing as giants of our profession retire and become legends, while feisty fledgling upstarts make their mark and shape the environmental health world for the better. See the *Member Updates* section in this newsletter to get caught up on the comings and goings of your colleagues.

We held our [2018 Fall Conference](#) in Rochester on October 4 and it was symbolic of where MEHA is headed strategically. By collaborating with the Minnesota Association of Housing Code Officials, we built some new bridges with our colleagues and coworkers in complimentary sectors. Environmental health goes well beyond licensing and regulation of food, pools, and lodging establishments. The practice of environmental health is essential in and around the home. Minnesotans have an expectation that their water is safe, air is clean, waste is properly managed, and living quarters facilitate good health; regardless of where they live around the state. Our profession will continue intersecting with other areas of public health. I personally believe we will become more focused on not only preventing environmental exposures that negatively impact health, but also encouraging exposures that benefit health (exercise, nutrition, climate resilient environments, balanced microbiomes, etc.)

This last year was a busy one for me both personally and professionally. My son and first child, Lachlan, was born in true prankster fashion on Labor Day, and I've recently transitioned from working at MDH to a new role with Saint Paul-Ramsey County Environmental Health. It was bittersweet leaving the Partnership and Workforce Development Unit at MDH, they are a group of amazing people devoted to bettering our EH professionals across all jurisdiction (you likely have no idea how much work goes into a single fact sheet or a training, it's a lot). But my landing at Saint Paul-Ramsey County has been made softer by an awesome team welcoming me with open arms and open minds.

So, my final thoughts I want to share with you are about teamwork. It's not always easy, but it's essential we remember that we are on the same Minnesota environmental health team. I believe we all want the same positive outcomes for our respective communities. I have been extremely fortunate to be part of great programs at Hennepin County, MDH, and now at Saint Paul-Ramsey County. What I've learned from working at these different organizations is that there is no silver bullet for excellent environmental health; it takes hard work, dedication, idea sharing, consistency, and a focus on constant improvement. I know firsthand that we are all working towards a goal of a safer and healthier Minnesota in our own ways, through various environmental interventions and education. I am extremely humbled by all the great work you do as my EH teammates throughout the state, and Minnesota is much better for it!

Respectfully submitted,

Caleb.

### ***2018 Jim Parker Leadership Award***

Congratulations to Daniel Huff, Director of Environmental Health, on receiving the Jim Parker Leadership Award at the 2018 Community Health Conference. This award is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to community health services at the state and local levels through their commitment to community health services department and their leadership in promoting the philosophy and purposes of community health services. Mr. Huff excels at partnerships big and small from leading a group to ensure safe food for first responders at the 2018 Super Bowl and helping a young hot dog entrepreneur with his hot dog stand.

Congratulations Dan!



## Metro area environmental health partners for Super Bowl food defense and food safety operation

For the first time this year, hosting the Super Bowl included intentionally making food defense a part of health operations. This group of partners targeted food safety for first responders at Super Bowl LII, working with vendors selected to prepare food for law enforcement. Over the 10-day operational period surrounding SB52, partners often worked long shifts and in sub-zero temperatures.

This partnership included environmental health programs from Anoka County, the City of Bloomington, the City of Brooklyn Park, the City of Edina, the Food Protection and Defense Institute at the University of Minnesota, Hennepin County, the City of Maplewood, the City of Minneapolis, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the Minnesota Department of Health, the City of Minnetonka, Ramsey County, Washington County, the US Food and Drug Administration, the US Food Safety and Inspection Service, and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.



*2018 Community Health Award Recipients and Representatives. First row (L to R): Allie Elbert, Nancy Mellesmoen, Terry Ristinen, Jokho Farah, Jan Malcolm, Gretchen Musicant, Betsy Brock, Sandy Tubbs. Second row: Dan Huff, Leslie Foreman, SA Stephens, Cindy Weckwerth, Roe Reinberg, Rose Jost, Bob Becker.*

## ***Bringing MEHA to NEHA!***

As many of you know, the Minnesota Environmental Health Association awards a stipend to attend the NEHA-AEC to one lucky recipient every year. This year, I was lucky enough to be the recipient of that stipend! The NEHA-AEC is a week-long annual education conference that is hosted by the National Environmental Health Association every year. This year it was hosted in Anaheim California. The NEHA-AEC brings together public health professionals from all walks of life and provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to network and connect with professional peers you didn't even know you had! I'd like to share a little bit about my experience at the conference in hopes that other MEHA members will try their hand at earning the stipend next year!

Let me just start by saying this conference was informative, exciting, lively, and also ENORMOUS. It was absolutely impossible to see everything while you were there, so those of us who attended had to plan our days out wisely. With an average of 5-7 presentations going on at any given time slot, the pressure to see as much as possible was definitely on. Luckily, there were some helpful tools that helped us plan out the days. First and foremost, the wonderful staff that were there to help guide and direct attendees around the conference center, and also an app that NEHA had created just for the conference that allowed you to see a snap shot of everything that was happening and add it to your own personal calendar. Now I know what you are thinking, "With so many incredibly talented and intelligent professionals all presenting at the same time, how did you pick which presentations to attend?" Well let me tell you, it wasn't easy. Personally, I chose to focus on things that I knew could soon be impacting my home state, things that were relevant to my job as a health inspector, and of course things that just sparked my interest! If I could give you an entire recap of the conference, I would in a heartbeat, but for now let's just focus on some highlights.

For me, one thing that stood out very clearly during this conference was how many presentations there were about cannabis and CBD products in California. As I'm sure some of you know, California is one of the few states in the US that allow the use of both medical and recreational marijuana. Because of this, there have been some interesting and unforeseen side effects for the citizens of California. For one, cannabis products must be grown within certain geographical restrictions (so many miles from schools, hospitals, etc.) and also in fully enclosed and locked spaces. For California, that means a lot of greenhouses being built on what was previously just natural land. With other restrictions specific to the greenhouse (mainly the requirement that they be well lit 24/7) many residents are now complaining of noise and light pollution near their rural properties. While California is still working out how to please both parties in that particular situation, other side effects have actually been beneficial to some residents of California. In particular, individuals who owned what was once unprofitable land alongside highways. These areas have become prime locations for cannabis greenhouses, and for some land owners, the value of their proper-

## Minnesota Environmental Health Association

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ties have increased 10x! An excellent boost to the California economy and a nice surprise for those land owners. The other unforeseen side effect of all of this is the absolute explosion of CBD products that California now has. These products are everywhere and in everything, from candy to medicines to smoothies to pet foods. The biggest issue surrounding the mass of CBD products is that nobody seems to know how to regulate these products, and who should be doing the regulating. With CBD products marketed as health enhancement products and not being actual cannabis, it makes the whole situation even more complicated. It is unclear how all of this will unfold in the future, but it's worth it to educate ourselves as public health professionals in this ever changing world.

As for the other presentations that stood out to me, I have a few. First, a presentation given by Nancy Hall about unconventional ingredients in conventional foods. With so many different food trends in today's society, it was exciting to hear her views and the science behind things such as gluten free products, vegan products, "superfoods", and even charcoal in food. Another fantastic presentation that stood out to me (as a self-professed hip hop nerd) was a presentation given by the employees of the Fairfax County Health Department in Virginia. The staff there have taken an extremely modern approach to vector borne disease outreach and started creating rap songs and videos detailing mosquito and tick prevention techniques for their community. It caught my interest so much because as public health professionals, we are always trying to get the attention of the public and do so in a way that the information we share sticks, and let me just say, I had their song "tick check 1, 2" stuck in my head for weeks! I highly suggest watching some of their YouTube videos for some great information and a good laugh!

Overall, attending this conference was an absolutely amazing experience where I got to learn, network, grow as a professional and experience a new city all at once. I would highly recommend it to anyone who thinks they may be interested in applying for future stipends. Aside from all the incredible knowledge and friendships that I took away from the conference, I also took away a beautiful mindset that grew over the course of that week. I was reminded of how important our jobs in public health are, and why we do what we do every day. It can be easy to feel like your day to day accomplishments get lost in the big picture, but you are all heroes to your communities and your efforts do not go unnoticed. Your roles as public health professionals are incredibly important and even though the world is an ever expanding and chaotic place, at the end of the day public health is profoundly local.

Rebecca Prestwood, REHS

Environmental Health Specialist

Minnesota Department of Health



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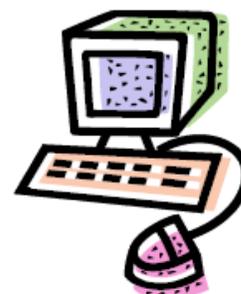
- Take modules individually
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\$75 full four-hour course

\$25 for each individual module

Register at [www.extension.umn.edu/food-safety](http://www.extension.umn.edu/food-safety)



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MEHA WINTER CONFERENCE

ST. PAUL, MN

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PAUL CAMPUS

JANUARY 31, 2019

MEHA SPRING CONFERENCE

RUTTGER'S BAY LAKE LODGE

DEERWOOD, MN

MAY 9-10, 2019

NEHA REGION 4 CONFERENCE

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

SEPTEMBER 25-26, 2019

Calendar  
of  
Events



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***Environmental Health info with you in a timely manner.***

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# MEHA Spring Conference-2018 Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge



Sadie Pulk pictured with 2018 MEHA Lifetime Achievement award recipient Del Matasovsky and Nick Koreen, City of Minneapolis with the MEHA Emerging Professional Award.



Congratulations to Jeff Brown, City of Edina, recipient of the 2018 Frank A. Staffenson Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award. A job well done!

# MEHA Spring Conference-2018 Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge



Bean Bag Tournament at the conference. A good time was had by all!

Silent auction and raffle items. Thanks to everyone for your generous donations!



Minnesota Environmental Health Association

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# MEHA Spring Conference-2018

## Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge



Passing of the gavel from outgoing President Nichole Hedeem to incoming President Caleb Johnson



A conference well attended!

Minnesota Environmental Health Association

[www.MEHAonline.org](http://www.MEHAonline.org)

# MEHA/MACHO Conference-2018

## Rochester

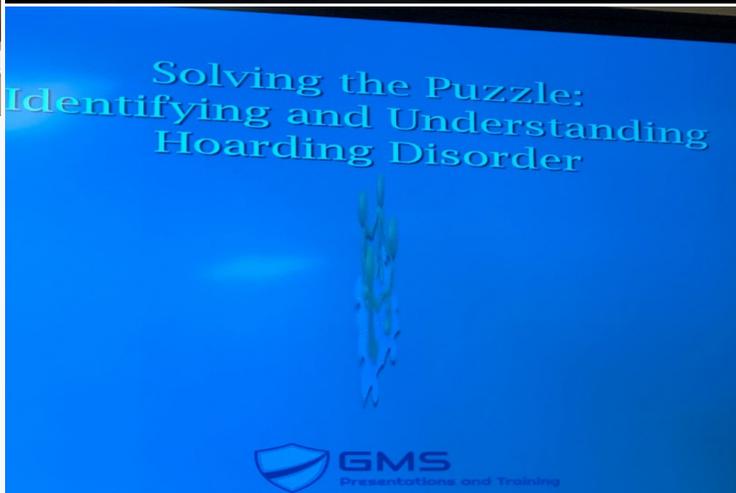


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# MEHA/MACCHO Conference-2018

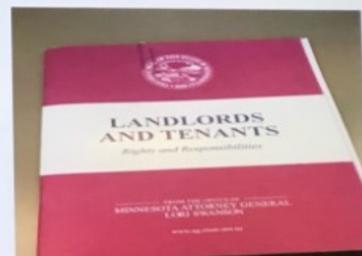
## Rochester



**Thank you to the conference committee for a job well done in planning the joint MEHA/MACCHO conference!**

**(L to R: Lorena Hilton, City of Bloomington, Michelle Messer, MDH and Nick Koren, City of Minneapolis.**

### Renters & Mold Complaints



**Minnesota Environmental Health Association**

**[www.MEHAonline.org](http://www.MEHAonline.org)**

Congratulations to the following people who passed the REHS/RS Exam  
in 2018

**Nicole Ahlbrecht**

**Alexander Hintz**

**Chris Marnell**

**Kaylie Prochaska**

**Michael Smith**

**Amanda Veith**

**Christain Hansen**

**Gerald Malloy**

**Emily Schoblaksi**

**Christain B. Hansen**

**Kenya F. Urena-Muro**

**Sophia RG Walsh**

**Jamie R. Stowell Finke**

**Mai Pa Kou Yang**

**Juan Eduardo Mardones Claro**

**Charlene F Gruber**

**Brandon L. Klein**

**Vanessa Prebish**

**Dustin Vang**

**Adam Charles Lewis**



**MEHA WINTER CONFERENCE**  
**JANUARY 31, 2019 | ST PAUL, MN**

## **MEMBER UPDATES**

**On the Move...Caleb Johnson from MDH FPLS to St. Paul-Ramsey County**

**On the Move...Doug Dyer, Washington County to Seattle-King County Public Health as Health Investigator III-Food and Facilities Program**

**On the Move...See Lee from MDH to MDA**

**On the Move...Rebecca Prestwood from MDA to MDH**

**Congratulations to Jesse Hennes on his promotion to EH supervisor at Washington County**

**Congratulations to Julia Selley on her promotion to supervisor at Hennepin County**

**Congratulations to Sue Goepfert on her promotion to EH supervisor at Anoka County**

**Congratulations to Abdi Nur on his promotion to environmentalist at Hennepin County**

**Congratulations to Barb Krech on her promotion to senior environmentalist at Hennepin County**

**Welcome to Armarie Williams to City of Bloomington**

**Welcome to Tom Olson, EHS to Anoka County**

**Welcome to Mark Emlaw to Anoka County**

**Welcome to Sarah Eckerman to MDH**

**Welcome Asbah Hadi to MDH**

**Welcome to Ashley Berberich to MDH**

**Welcome to Melissa Ramos to MDH**

**Welcome to Nate Topp to MDH**

**Welcome to Jared Morrill to MDH**

**Our sympathy to Angie Cyr, MDH FPLS on the loss of her mother and father**

**Our sympathy to Manny Camilon, retiree, on the loss of his wife**

**Congratulations to Kyle Johnsen, MDH on his recent wedding**

**Congratulations to Jim Donovan, City of Minneapolis and Tessa (Whitemarsh) on their wedding**

**Congratulations to Sharon (Smith) Kline, retiree, on her wedding**

## MEMBER UPDATES

**Announcements:** Stay tuned to the next issue of the newsletter for highlights of several longtime MEHA members who have recently retired.

*Thank you to the following people who contributed to this issue: Angie Cyr, Dan Disrud, Lynn Moore Rebecca Prestwood, Tracey Zerwas and Jim Topie.*

### **Request From The Editor**

An important part of the newsletter is the human element—what is going on with MEHA members. Please let the editor know about any comings and goings, births, weddings, honors...

Deadline for the next issue is

***March 1, 2019***

Send to:

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