



# MEHA BULLETIN



## President's Message Submitted by Caleb Johnson

I will get the obvious out of the way and acknowledge the aggravating irony of writing a spring President's address while being stuck in what seems like a never-ending parade of snow storms and below average temperatures. Now that I've done my Minnesotan "talk about the weather" ice breaker, I'll get to business.

We have a fantastic lineup of candidates for our 2019-2020 board member positions:

<b>Member-at Large</b>	<b>First Year Director</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
Nate Kelley	David Boberg	Lisa Schreifels	Nicole Skatrud
Patrick Kuisle	Denise Schumacher	Sagar Chowdhury	
James Noyola			

**President**  
**Caleb Johnson**  
**Spring 2019 Issue**  
**Volume 47, No. 1**

***IN THIS EDITION***  
**Candidate Bios**

**MEHA Member Retirement Highlights**

**Calendar of Events**

This is a great blend of members from the Twin Cities metro area and greater Minnesota. I am confident every single candidate on the ballot would make a great board member. Please review their bios found later in this newsletter to make an informed choice at the electronic "voting booth".

Relatedly, I want to express my extreme gratitude to First-Past President, Nicole Hedeem, for rounding up a great bunch of candidates and for being a great mentor to me over the years. I also want to assure members that the future is extremely bright for this association. Your incoming President, Mike Melius, is a thoughtful and talented leader who will make MEHA even better.

Some MEHA members may not realize how fortunate we are to have such dedicated members who serve on our board and committees. We are miles ahead of most other state affiliates when it comes to the value of membership. This is because of people who want to continuously improve their profession. By keeping our members educated and updated on current trends and future developments in environmental health, we elevate the standard of our profession in Minnesota.

Additionally, the work the Registration Committee does preparing our incoming colleagues for obtaining their RS/REHS credential is incredibly vital to MEHA's success. High caliber professionals, demonstrated through rigorous credentialing, is a large part of Minnesota's reputation as a state that has our environmental health act together. I want to thank Frank Sedzielarz and Chris Forslund for their years of service on the Registration Committee. The wisdom and resources they've shared with new environmental health professionals has resulted in a fantastic RS/REHS exam pass rate for members who have participated in their study sessions.

I'll conclude my final president's address with a call to action directed at the next generation of Minnesota environmental health leaders. Decades of MEHA members before us have elevated this association and profession to the nationally respected status we enjoy today. We have some amazing members who can make valuable improvements to this association, and therefore this profession. Commitment to one's profession is part of what distinguishes a fulfilling career from a fruitless job. Come off the sidelines and get into the game; shape your career through involvement with your professional association. It takes hard work at times, but the effort is well worth it.

**Minnesota Environmental Health Association**

**www.MEHAonline.org**

***Several MEHA board positions will be voted on by members prior to the annual meeting. Candidates have submitted the following biographies for your review.***



***Lisa Schreifels***  
***Candidate for Vice President***  
***Retired***

Hello! I'm Lisa Schreifels. I've been an active member of MEHA for 15 years and am running for MEHA Vice President.

The professional development and networking provided by MEHA continues to astound. MEHA keeps us connected through conferences, the newsletter, email blasts, social media, outreach opportunities, mentoring future EH professionals and more. Keeping our organization strong and relevant is crucial, and I want to be a part of that continued success.

Currently I serve on the MEHA Finance Committee where I have worked with the Treasurer for the last 10 years to ensure financial stability. I've also represented MEHA at STEM youth events and volunteered as a MEHA mentor. In 2016, I was a MEHA Merit Award recipient and in 2013, I was honored to receive the MEHA to NEHA scholarship. From 2007-2018 I served as a member of the Minnesota Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Sanitarian Advisory Council, where I also served as chair.

I have a B.S. in Biology from St. Cloud State University and an A.A. from Minneapolis Community College. I worked in environmental education prior to discovering environmental health.

In 2002, I joined Stearns County and performed septic and food inspections. In 2005, I joined the City of St. Cloud as an Environmental Health Specialist and became the Health Director in 2007. After resigning as Health Director in 2018, I decided to renew my dedication to areas that my hectic work schedule hadn't previously allowed. I would be honored to use my expertise to serve MEHA as Vice President.

I currently live in Sartell with my husband Hank. Our kids became young adults, which left our dog and cat behind to be robustly spoiled. Both Hank and I enjoy kayaking, birdwatching, bicycling, snowshoeing, and mentoring young readers at the Boys and Girls Club.

I would be honored to serve as MEHA Vice President and would appreciate your vote. Thank you!



***Sagar Chowdhury***  
***Candidate for***  
***Vice-President***  
***City***  
***Of***  
***St. Cloud***

Hello! My name is Sagar Chowdhury and I am excited to be running for the position of MEHA Vice President.

I am a Registered Environmental Health Specialist, and currently work as the Assistant Health Director for the City of St. Cloud. In this role I supervise both the Housing Code Enforcement and Environmental Health Divisions of the department. Prior to working with the City of St. Cloud I worked as a Sanitarian for Olmsted County, conducting food, pools, and lodging inspections.

Preceding my work in Environmental Health I graduated with a MPH in 2014 and shortly after became a health educator for Dodge County. In this role I worked as the Emergency Preparedness and Medical Reserve Corp Coordinators for the county, as well as managed the Tobacco Free Communities and Clearway Minnesota Grants.

My wife and I have an amazing 2 year daughter who truthfully eats up most of our downtime these days. When we do have downtime we love spending it outdoors, especially hiking, camping, and canoeing.

I look forward to the opportunity to continue to help advance the great work that MEHA does and continue to promote their mission. Thank you for your consideration!



***David Boberg***  
***Candidate for First***  
***Year Director***  
***Minnesota***  
***Department***  
***of Agriculture***

Greetings colleagues!

I have been working as an Environmental Health Specialist in various aspects for about 14 yrs.

I graduated from UW-Eau Claire with a BS in Environmental & Public Health. Later on, I was able to continue my education by obtaining a MS in Public Safety specializing in Emergency Management.

During my career, I have worked at Morrison/Todd County Public Health, City of Bloomington Environmental Health and for the past 3 years at the MN Department of Agriculture. Working at different jurisdiction levels has provided me with a unique perspective of the great work we do daily to protect our communities and has also helped in developing diverse partnerships to accomplish the same goals. For the past two years I have been involved in the MEHA mentorship program and this year I am proudly serving as the MEHA Member At Large.

In my spare time I enjoy doing house projects, making delicious foods, being outdoors and spending time with my friends, wife, 2 energetic children, and old dog.

I look forward to your vote and the opportunity to assist in advancing the great work that MEHA does!

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***Denise Schumacher***  
***Candidate for First***  
***Year Director***  
***Minnesota Department***  
***Of Health***  
***Marshall Office***

Hi MEHA colleagues! My name is Denise Schumacher and I am honored to be running for First Year Director. I have worked at local and state agencies in the environmental public health field for over 18 years. I am currently a Planner at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) in the Partnership and Workforce Development Unit collaborating with our local partners and assisting with communications. Prior years of service include Environmental Laboratory Program Assessor for the MDH Public Health Laboratory and Environmental Health Manager/Registered Sanitarian for Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone Public Health Services, the agency now named Southwest Health and Human Services.

I have been a member of MEHA since 2000 and currently a member of the Legislative Committee. I was selected as the MEHA scholarship recipient for the NEHA 2016 AEC and HUD Healthy Home Conference in San Antonio, Texas.

In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my husband, daughter and three dogs at our home in southwest Minnesota. I love volunteering, traveling and enjoying many of the great outdoor activities that Minnesota has to offer.

I am excited at the opportunity to increase my involvement in MEHA and continuing collaboration with you and other environmental health professionals on a state and national level to promote the innovative work we do in the environmental health field. Thank you for your consideration and it would be an honor to represent you as MEHA's First Year Director.



***Nate Kelley***  
***Candidate for***  
***Member-at-Large***  
***City***  
***of***  
***Minneapolis***

Hello All!

My name is Nate Kelly and I am running for the MEHA Member at Large position.

I graduated from University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health and a chemistry minor.

Professionally, I got my start in the Environmental Public Health field with the City of Minneapolis Health Department in 2012, as an intern with Food, Lodging and Pools. After graduation, I was hired on full-time with the City of Minneapolis as an area Health Inspector and have been with them ever since. During this time, I took on responsibilities as the lead inspector for Target Field, Target Center and U.S. Bank Stadium. I am also the lead inspector for our Board and Lodging program.

Personally, I live in Minneapolis and got married this past September in St. Paul. I am very active with snowboarding, running, playing soccer, volleyball and broomball. I try to travel as much as possible, I recently spent three weeks traveling throughout Thailand and Laos.

I am looking forward this possible opportunity to expand my skillset with MEHA and become more involved in an amazing organization.

-Nate



***Patrick Kuisle***  
***Candidate***  
***For***  
***Member-at-Large***  
***Hennepin County***

Hello, my name is Patrick Kuisle and I am running for MEHA's Member-At-Large Position.

I am an environmentalist at Hennepin County where I work in plan review, septic systems, transient non-community public water supplies, and food establishment inspections.

After graduating from St. John's University in 2005, I worked for a private animal health firm for 8 years focusing on swine immunology. When it became time to move on from the laboratory bench, I moved all the way to New Zealand for a year then went on to bicycle tour across parts of Thailand and Burma. I now live in south Minneapolis with my wife Emily and daughter Whitney, and study as a graduate student at the University Of Minnesota School Of Public Health.

I have attended every MEHA conference and many volunteer events since becoming a member in 2015 and I appreciate the learning opportunities and insights gained through the Association. I am inspired by the work of MEHA's members and I hope to help continue planning great conferences and networking events. In my spare time, I volunteer with community food shares and also enjoy brewing, playing music, fishing and mountain biking.

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***James Noyola***  
***Candidate***  
***For***  
***Member-at-Large***  
***Minnesota***  
***Department***  
***Of***  
***Health***

Hello! My name is James Noyola and I'm honored to be considered for the MEHA Member at Large position. I appreciate the work, education, and public outreach that MEHA does and would like to be a part of this great organization. Thank you for taking the time to read my bio and for your participation in MEHA.

After graduating from the University of St Thomas (Go Tommie's!) with a B.A. in Biology I was hired by the Minnesota Department of Health in the Food, Pools division in August of 2013. I've been here ever since. I started off inspecting in St. Paul and have had various territories throughout St. Paul, Dakota County and Isanti County. Some career highlights so far have been Xcel Energy Center Coordinator, coordinating large events for the Super Bowl and being the Minnesota State Fair Coordinator. I'm currently a Sanitarian Supervisor in the metro.

I've been married to my wife Steph for 1.5 years but we've been together for 11 years. We live in south Minneapolis and have one dog, Knowles (after Beyoncé). In my free time I enjoy all Minnesota has to offer. I love to camp and try to fish as much as possible. I can't say I particularly enjoy exercising but I do it so I can try all the delicious restaurants and breweries Minneapolis has to offer with no regrets. My wife and I also enjoy taking the dog for a walk and biking to a local lake to relax on a beach.



***Nicole Skatrud***  
***Candidate***  
***For***  
***Secretary***  
***St. Paul-Ramsey County***

Hello! My name is Nicole Skatrud and I am running for the MEHA secretary position. In May 2017, I graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health. During May of 2016 to March of 2017, I had an internship at the Saint Paul – Ramsey County Health Department. During my internship, I conducted swimming pool inspections, temporary food events, and vending machine inspections. After my internship, I worked as a temporary employee at Ramsey County for six months until I became a permanent employee in November of 2017. I have been conducting food inspections, pool inspections, lodging inspections, mobile home park inspections, plan reviews, and public health nuisances.

I have been a MEHA member for the last 4 years. As a student, I participated in two MEHA mentorship programs and I presented at the 2017 winter conference poster session. My research was on the presence of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* in intensive care unit sink water. I also received the NorthStar Scholarship at the 2017 winter conference. This past year was my first year serving as MEHA secretary.

In my downtime I enjoy traveling, spending time outside with friends and family, playing with my dog, and watching re-runs of my favorite T.V. shows.

Thank you for your consideration.

## ***Congratulations to Lorna Girard (MDA) On Her Retirement***



Lorna Girard retired on January 3, 2019 after nearly 37 years of public service in food protection and Environmental Health. She started her career in 1982 working as a Public Health Sanitarian for the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. From there, Lorna worked for Washington County Environmental Health and spent the last 19 years of her career working for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture as a Food Inspection Supervisor.

Lorna served on the Conference for Food Protection Executive Board for 12 years as the Midwest Region State representative. Most notably, she led the committee that produced the risk-based inspection form, otherwise known as the "CFP form", which many food inspection agencies across the nation use on a daily basis, to include the MDA, MDH, and their delegated agencies.

Lorna is a person with many talents and interests apart from her well established role as a leader in food safety. She earned titles with her expert use of the foil while fencing in college for the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1980, her team took its second Big Ten Conference title. Lorna went 43-2 for the season and captured her third consecutive foil title. She made the women's All-American Fencing Team in

1979. Lorna was also a pilot and she has some very interesting life experiences to share while breaking ground pursuing this interest. She also spent 25 years with the WI DNR on a part-time basis conducting air-quality monitoring.

Lorna and her spouse Lindy are very much enjoying retirement, spending time traveling and shoveling snow. She states that every day is a weekend and she is looking forward to spending the summer in Wisconsin enjoying their camper and pursuing other interests, such as taking up drumming again.



*Congratulations Debra Anderson, Hennepin County, On Your Retirement*



In June of 2018, after 37 years with Hennepin County Environmental Health, supervisor Debra Anderson retired. Deb was one of the first health inspectors with the county and has been instrumental in many decision-making processes. She has trained and standardized more people than we could count and was always a resource inspectors turned to for help.

Deb loved the variety that our work affords us -- even after 37 years she saw new things and was always learning. The people are what Deb enjoyed most about her job.

Deb stated the following about our customers:

"They are great people to deal with, and more and more as the years have passed they realize that we're both trying to accomplish the same thing and that we're here to help them run their businesses better. It's become much more of a collaboration."

Deb plans to do a lot of traveling now that she's retired. She's also a competitive figure skater and is working on passing the next level.

We miss Deb but wish her well in retirement!

## ***Congratulations to Sharon (Smith) Kline, MDH, On Her Retirement***

Sharon Smith began her career in Public Health as a sanitarian in rural Minnesota and worked her way to the Non-Community Unit Supervisor for the Minnesota Department of Health Drinking Water Protection Section. However, Sharon will be best remembered for her dedication to MEHA. She held many roles in the profession including newsletter editor, scholarship trustee, co-chair of the conference planning committee, co-chair of the professional development and outreach committee, vice president and president and was elected NEHA Region 4 vice-president. She is both the recipient of MEHA merit awards as well as the Environmental Health Professional of the Year award in 1998.

*Karen Swenson, former colleague of Sharon's, had the following memories to share:*

“ I have had the pleasure to know Sharon for my entire career in Minnesota. As a matter of fact, Sharon and I took the REHS exam together and we became friends even before that.”

“Sharon has always been an advocate for local public health and spent her entire career making sure environmental health in MN was fully and legitimately integrated into the public health system here. Sharon served MEHA well. She has served on many committees and contributed more time than most in our profession advancing environmental health on the local, state and national level..

“Those of us who are lucky enough to call Sharon a close friend were also lucky to spend many, many hours/after hours with her while attending most, if not all MEHA and Community Health Conferences. Here are some little-known facts about Sharon we have learned through the years:

1. Sharon is one of the dedicated, most active, passionate environmental advocates for environmental health in Minnesota.
2. Sharon is a wonderful friend and mother.
3. Sharon is one of the “neatest”, most organized friends we have traveled with.

4. Sharon is one of the most frugal friends we have , we could always count on her to find the best deal, whether we were traveling locally or across the country to attend a conference, or when she helped plan a conference.
5. Sharon somehow managed to get the best accommodations anywhere we as a group were going.
6. Sharon makes the best bars to have in your room for when the conference food is lacking!
- 7.. Her Nickname is “Sharon O’Smith” and as that name indicates... Sharon is always willing to have fun along the way... which is one of the most important things!”

MEHA thanks you for your years of service, your dedication and commitment to our organization. You truly made a difference in environmental health in Minnesota. Enjoy the next chapter of your life. A job well done!





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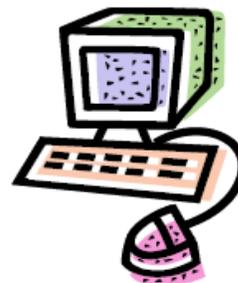
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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**MEHA Spring Conference**

**May 9-10, 2019**

**Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge**

**2019 NEHA AEC**

**Nashville, Tennessee**

**July 9-12, 2019**

**NEHA Region 4 Conference**

**Omaha, Nebraska**

**September 25-26, 2019**

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**MEHA is on Facebook! Visit our page and join the group! Please "Like" us so we can share MEHA news and other interesting Environmental Health info with you in a timely manner.**



**Thanks to the following people who contributed to this edition of the newsletter: Karen Swenson, Nicole Hedeem, Caleb Johnson, Lisa Schreifels, Sagar Chowdhury, Dave Boberg, Denise Schumacher, Nate Kelley, Patrick Kuisle, James Noyola and Nicole Skatrud, Joe Jurusik, Jeff Luedeman and Hannah Marshinke.**

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