

VEHA's 2019 Annual Report to Membership

The Virginia Environmental Health Association (VEHA) board is pleased to present its' annual report to the membership for calendar year 2019. This report documents the progress of VEHA over the past year from the perspective of the board members *in their own words*, and highlights milestones and accomplishments noted along the way. I invite you to review our report and seek out board members for additional information should you have any questions.

President – Sandy Stoneman (2018-2020)

Fall Greetings VEHA Members! I appreciate you taking time to read this update from the VEHA Board. The board is made up of 15 positions. Two are at-will positions and 13 are two-year terms. Our association is fortunate to continue to have people in these positions that are engaged in their field and share the commitment to promote environmental health in Virginia. These positions are voluntary and necessary for the survival and growth of our association. I encourage you to reach out to your delegate or any board member and thank them for their service, inform them of emerging EH issues, ask questions, volunteer to help, or better yet, volunteer to serve on the board or a committee. Your involvement at any level makes VEHA stronger!

As your current VEHA president, I had the opportunity to attend the National Environmental Health Annual Education Conference this past July. It was held in Nashville, TN and was a wonderful learning experience. In the Affiliate Leadership Workshop, affiliates from almost all 50 states had the opportunity to learn how to help their association be better engaged in legislative issues involving EH, learn how other states run their associations, and the types of educational opportunities they offer. The concurrent educational sessions held each day covered a wide variety of current and relevant EH topics ensuring that there was always something interesting to attend. I would highly recommend attending the next NEHA AEC which will be held in New York, July 13-16, 2020. <https://www.neha.org/news-events/aec-annual-educational-conference-0>

Also in July, the VEHA Past President, David Fridley, and I had the opportunity to attend and present at the Interstate Environmental Health Seminar in Richmond, KY. The IEHS is an organization made of EH Associations from NC, MD, KY, WV, TN, SC, GA, AL and now VA. IEHS puts on an EH Seminar each year with each state rotating as the host. David gave a presentation on climate change and the EH impacts in coastal VA and I presented on the new Virginia Food Allergy Training for the Food Service Industry program. This seminar will be another educational opportunity in 2020 that we will share as soon as the information is released.

This year the board has also been busy planning and delivering multiple EH educational events. This past spring VEHA hosted the Onsite Workshop in Providence Forge and the first ever Food Safety Education Day in Christiansburg/Blacksburg. Both were well attended and similar

VEHA's 2019 Annual Report to Membership

workshops are being planned for spring 2020 but will be held in different locations. Coming up VEHA is hosting the Fall Educational Conference that will have food safety/vector and onsite tracks. This will be held in Richmond at the Roslyn Retreat Center on October 29. Don't miss out on this opportunity to get your CEUs and network! You can register and see the agenda on the [VEHA website](#).

As my first year as VEHA President comes to an end, I can say it has flown by and I appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve the VEHA membership and promote the field of environmental health in VA. Feel free to reach out to me anytime with your thoughts or suggestions!

Sandy Stoneman

VP of Member Services – Jessica Stewart (2018-2020)

Since VEHA has refreshed our software subscription to the Wild Apricot platform, our membership, member maintenance, and the event registration process is completely streamlined and simplified. We ultimately want our members to have easy access to VEHA membership information, educational opportunities, and professional advancement. I believe this online platform, our current President, and our talented board members (past and present) have accomplished that goal. We will continue to develop our website and member services to maintain accessibility and relevance to our members. If you have any suggestions on how to make anything on the website easier to navigate, etc. please provide your input because it is always greatly appreciated!

VEHA currently has 151 active members. We have quite a few members whose membership is about to, or has recently, expired. I encourage you to explore the VEHA website, update your member profile and, if needed, renew your membership. I hope to see you all at the 2019 VEHA Fall Educational Conference in Richmond, VA.

VP of Programs and Capitol Area Delegate- Tammy Faulkner (2017-2019)

The Spring of 2019 brought about a change in the way educational opportunities were brought to the membership. In addition to specific events for the onsite professionals, there was also a food track specific event. The food only event was well received. Going into 2020, the Board will be planning education events on the same format. In the Spring there will be an on-site specific education opportunity as well as a food/environmental specific event. The Fall meeting will be a combined meeting as is required by the by-laws. The board believes a stronger focus can be placed

VEHA's 2019 Annual Report to Membership

on each of the professional disciplines by having conference specific events where the Fall meeting is the annual membership event. Unless membership voices opposition to the education event offerings, the board will continue with this pattern into 2020.

Also, the board is contemplating participating more fully in the Eastern Regional Association. This means that we would be taking on being in a rotation for hosting a regional conference made-up of the Eastern Region states. Currently, the regional association is planned out for the year 2025, so the earliest we could host would be 2026. However, plans would to host a 2026 event need to begin by the end of 2023 and firmed up in 2024. Benefits include further expansion of professional development opportunities to a regional level by networking with other state environmental health specialists. This gives us the ability to converse about and better understand the environmental health issues we deal with locally, statewide, and regionally. VEHA would be responsible for locating a venue, selecting a date, as well as, filling the agenda with speakers and organizing social activities. Attendance to the events has been relatively large in numbers, so this is no small gathering. It is also a task for a committee, a group of persons sharing resources and completing to complete the task.

Organizing an educational conference is not the sole responsibility of the Vice President of Programs. The VP of Programs has a hand in seeking out speakers, locating a venue, and organizing the agenda, but so do all board members as well as organization members. The key is that we are a Commonwealth-wide organization and someone knows something/somebody others may not. The idea for education is to bring what we may experience as individuals into the membership of the group, or bring the experience of other professionals who want to share their knowledge. Members are encourage to present ideas for presentations and case studies to the board, as well as each board member present ideas, as we look to fill the next educational opportunity's agenda. We are working toward being more future oriented, which means having an upcoming event planned as well as having the next event in the works. Thank you for your support.

VP of Professional Advancement – Bryant Wooden (2018-2020)

As VP of Professional Advancement for VEHA, I have been able to participate in the monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss business, planning, and continued success of the organization. I have attended and assisted with the VEHA Educational Conferences.

I continue to inspire fellow environmental health professionals and students to become members of the VEHA organization and be a part of the great educational trainings which provided professional CEU's and awards that will be helpful for career opportunity. A few of the awards and

VEHA's 2019 Annual Report to Membership

recognitions that are available through VEHA include student scholarship opportunities, the Certificate of Merit, the Environmental Health Professional of the Year, and the A. Clark Slaymaker Award.

VEHA was able to provide two \$500 educational scholarships this spring to students attending Old Dominion University. It is a great opportunity to work with the VEHA organization and I encourage any professionals and students interested in scholarships and awards to visit our VEHA website.

Treasurer- (At Will) – Lauren Grimmer

This year, I've represented VEHA as the Treasurer. My main duties have been to maintain the budget and pay for operating costs. I also complete our annual tax submittal and ensure that we pay the state commission to maintain our non-profit status. As part of the transition to the Wild Apricot software, we are now able to accept credit card payments for conferences and have moved to a new online payment system administered by Wild Apricot.

Southwest Area Delegate – Leon Vinci (2017-2019)

As 2019 winds-down, it has been a great opportunity to serve as the SW Virginia Area Regional Delegate for VEHA. I have been able to take part in the monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss matters and business of the organization. I attended the 2019 VEHA Spring Workshop and this year's Annual Educational Conference (AEC) for NEHA.

I am looking forward to attending our Fall Meeting and to meet with speakers and attendees during the food safety and subsurface disposal sessions. I encourage my fellow colleagues from the South West Virginia Region to attend the upcoming Fall VEHA Educational Conference to network and obtain educational credits for professional credentials.

As for the SW Virginia region, this summer has been consistently hot with record-breaking temps. As you know, we are still in a 'drought' phase. As environmental professionals in situations like this, it is always important to be able to educate and have an open line of communication with our citizenry and facilities to protect public health.

It is a great opportunity to work with our VEHA organization as we continue to protect the environment and communities through further understanding of public health. I encourage anyone interested in making the VEHA organization a continued success, to visit our website at virginiaeha.org or reach out to any of our area delegates.

VEHA's 2019 Annual Report to Membership

Past President – David Fridley (2018-2020)

After taking part in the Interstate Environmental Health Seminar in Kentucky this summer, I was pleased to be invited by a North Carolina IEHS representative to speak at this fall's North Carolina Public Health Association fall conference in Greensboro. Josh Jordon, Environmental Health Regional Specialist, is the President of the Environmental Health Section of the NCPHA, which encompasses all roles of that state's public health workforce, including public health directors, nursing, epidemiology, social work, dental health, academic research, and women's and children's health. Josh felt that the climate change message I had brought to the IEHS would be a good fit for the Environmental Health program in North Carolina.

I was amazed to arrive there late this September to a four-day conference with approximately 600 attendees. Someone must have been back at the local health offices to keep the lights on, but it seemed as if most of the state's public health workforce had taken the time to take part in this opportunity.

I presented a set of material on climate science, the health effects of increased heat over time, and a case history reflecting policy challenges brought about by sea level rise, increased erosion and storm surge. Although I enjoyed this opportunity and the topic was received with interest, what was really notable to me was the mix of disciplines who chose to attend this particular session. Not only "environmental health" professionals, but also health directors, nurses, and health equity members of the health workforce were engaged in discussion. I was part of a set of presentations on various aspects of climate change, after which I took part in a panel discussion including North Carolina speakers on minority health, water well safety, clinical nursing and county-specific responses to our changing climate.

This inter-specialty interest and dialogue was very impressive to me, and I was reminded of the real value in talking to people outside our normal, day-to-day lanes. It is a tiresome cliché to talk about breaking out of your "silo"—after all, real silos are very practical structures that lose their value when they break. Still, there is some truth there; it was worthwhile to see people who ordinarily just pass each other in the hall listening and talking to each other. I know that I learned some things that day.

This same thing is true in the environmental health profession in Virginia, both inside and outside of our VEHA membership and educational sessions. I know that I have learned some amazing things from my fellow EH professionals from all walks of life. So: always be on the lookout for someone you might not ordinarily share with. Something good just may come of it.

And not to forget, I was able to connect with Angela Sowers, who you may remember from the VEHA Board of Directors several years ago, and who is now employed in North Carolina public health and the Treasurer of the Environmental Health section of the NCPHA!