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## **National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council**

*Enhancing the education and training of students  
in environmental health science and protection*

**August 2020**

**Greetings EHAC Colleagues,**

This is EHAC's email newsletter in which you'll find important accreditation and policy updates, reminders of accreditation related deadlines, publications, EHAC related news, scholarship and internship opportunities for EHAC students, stories from students excelling in school and in their EH Careers and reports from colleagues "from the field". [Please note: you may need to click on "Display Images Below" in order to see photographs, etc.]

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## **Greetings from EHAC's New General Chair - Jason Finley, MS, BCES, DAAS, REHS, RS, CHMM**

I hope this correspondence finds each of you and your families well. I cannot tell you how excited I am to be the General Chairperson of EHAC this year. I was fortunate to come onto the Council in 2015 and to serve as your Vice Chair for Undergraduate Programs on the Board of Directors for the past two years.

A little about myself: after spending a few years as an Environmental Consultant, I have spent the last eighteen years serving our country in the National Guard as an Army Environmental Science Officer on a Civil Support Team (CST). What an experience it has

been to work with world class professionals, both on Council as well as Program Directors, faculty and students at EHAC accredited degree programs.

Unfortunately, I was not aware of EHAC when I was in college, otherwise, I would have certainly pursued an EHAC degree. In fact, I am going to make a statement here that I welcome anyone to fact check - "You teach the world's most diverse applied STEM curriculum! Congratulations!" And, a major goal for 2020-21, is to raise the awareness of the availability and value of an EHAC accredited education, so that others don't miss out on a worthwhile opportunity.

As Academicians you develop what stands between hazard and harm – the Environmental Health Professional!

While the COVID19 pandemic has created innumerable challenges to education worldwide and particularly to the internship component of EHAC's criteria, EHAC remains steadfast in its support of accredited degree programs. If there are any questions or concerns, COVID19 related or other, please contact Leslie or me.

Together, we will endeavor to produce outstanding world class professionals. I hope you consider EHAC part of your team. You are certainly part of ours. An Inclusive Team. Good luck as the new academic year begins!

Respectfully,



Jason Finley

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## EHAC Convenes First Virtual Annual Meeting - July 11-12, 2020

EHAC's Annual Council Meeting took place via ZOOM on July 11 and 12, 2020. Council Members and guest speakers created a productive and welcoming online experience for all involved. The Council worked through a full agenda that included presentations from EHAC standing and ad hoc committees, a review of EHAC's Annual Update Survey, reaccreditation reviews, and significant opportunities for committee work including updates as well as developing goals and objectives for the coming year.

**EHAC Council Members meet via Zoom!**

 Tania Marie Busch...	 Leslie Mitchell	 Jason Lewis	 Jason	 Mike Fletcher	 Tom Deem + Bo...
 Mark Houser	 Swatantra Kethired...	 Don Williams	 SANDRA	 Wendell Moore	 ctraser
 Sharon	 Laura Suppes	 Timothy Murphy	 Chris a Sparks	 PAUSE Priscille...	 D Gary Buzam
 Chyla Hunter	 Ying Li	 Chad Brown	 Bella Salby	 David Gilkey	 Michael Quinn

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## EHAC Welcomes New Board and Council Members

### 2020-2021 EHAC Board Leadership:

**General Chair:** Jason Finley, MS, DAAS, REHS, RS - Practitioner, Kentucky National Guard

**Vice Chair for Graduate Programs:** Tania Busch Isaksen, MPH, PhD - Academic, University of Washington

**Vice Chair for Undergraduate Programs:** David Gilkey, D.C., PhD, DABCO, DACBOH, CPE, CSP, REHS/RS, FICC - Academic, Montana Tech

**Secretary:** Laura Suppes, PhD, MPH, REHS - Academic, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire

**Treasurer:** Tim Murphy, PhD, REHS, DAAS - Academic, University of Findlay, Ohio

**Director at Large:** Don Williams, CAPT (Ret. USPHS), REHS, MPH, DAAS - Practitioner, Arizona

### 2020-2023 Newly Elected Council Members:

#### Academics:

**Gary Brown**, PhD, Eastern Kentucky University

**David Gilkey**, D.C., PhD, DABCO, DACBOH, CPE, CSP, REHS/RS, FICC - Academic,

Montana Tech

**Carolyn Harvey**, PhD, RS, DAAS. CIH, DHMM, Retired from Eastern Kentucky University

**Lee Newman**, PhD, State University of New York, Environmental Science and Forestry

**Practitioners:**

**Chad Brown**, MPH, Director of Environmental Health, Licking County Health Department, Ohio

**Mike Quinn**, CDR, Department of the Interior, Colorado

**Tom Deem**, Senior Leader, The Boeing Company, Arizona

**Map Showing Geographic Distribution of 2020-2021 Council Members**



## **EHAC Council Approves Reaccreditation of Five Environmental Health Degree Programs**

## Reaccredited Undergraduate and Graduate Programs:

- **California State University, Northridge** - Environmental and Occupational Health Bachelor of Science Degree Program including Industrial Hygiene Option and Environmental and Occupational Health Master of Science Degree Program



- **East Tennessee State University** - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health Degree Program



- **Missouri Southern State University** - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health and Safety Degree Program



- **Old Dominion University** - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health Degree Program



- **West Chester University, Pennsylvania** - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health Degree Program



**Conditionally Accredited Undergraduate Programs:**

- **East Central University, Oklahoma** - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health Science Degree Program



## Geographic Distribution of Currently Accredited Environmental Health Degree Programs



-  Undergraduate Degree       Undergraduate and Graduate Degree       Graduate Degree

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## NEHA, EHAC, AEHAP and AAS - Joint Racial Equity Statement (published in June 2020)



**Racism Undermines Environmental Health Gains**

Recent and historic displays of police brutality against African Americans have laid bare the public health threats of racism. The National Environmental Health Association and its partners affirm that Black Lives Matter. As such, we condemn violence against people of color by authorities and others along with the systems that perpetuate racism and its pervasive public health consequences.

Our country has been traumatized by a recent series of traumatic environmental events. Hurricanes. Floods. Fires. Droughts. Zika. Lyme. COVID. And now the grim, painful specter of racial inequalities that have haunted American society since its inception. “Over the last two weeks I have listened to our African American/Black staff, board members, partners, members, retirees, and affiliate presidents”, said Dr. David Dyjack, NEHA Executive Director. “In their own words each has expressed: *I am not okay*”.

Environmental health strives to ensure that communities have healthy air to breathe. Yet, the last words of George Floyd were, “I can’t breathe.” Our best efforts to ensure healthy environments for all mean little when all people do not get to experience these advancements. Racism threatens public health through differences in access to and quality of healthcare and can be found at the center of poverty and limited employment opportunities, poor investment in education, and adverse environmental exposures.

Environmental racism systemically fosters inequities through processes and policies that perpetuate disproportionate exposure to hazards. As such, advocating for a health equity approach to address environmental justice issues in communities of color could provide a method to address the distribution of environmental burdens impacting those communities.

Key services provided by environmental health professionals are undermined by racism. In fact, still today, the most profound predictor of the location of hazardous facilities is race. This year, we celebrate 50 years of the Clean Air Act, which has significantly improved air quality, and thereby health across, the nation. However, these gains have not been universal. Communities of color continue to experience higher levels of air pollution exposure and related health disparities. Similarly, in celebrating considerable health gains resulting from 50 years of the Clean Water Act, infrastructure challenges have caused widespread exposure to lead-contaminated drinking water in heavily minority-populated communities, including Flint, MI, Washington, DC, Baltimore, MD, and Newark, NJ among other places across the nation. In addition, environmental health gains in food safety have

ushered protection from infectious diseases, yet food deserts persist in communities of color, contributing to challenges in accessing healthy, fresh foods and heightening risk of foodborne illness and chronic disease.

Our collective associations commit to explore systemic factors that adversely affect the delivery of environmental health services to our most vulnerable populations. We acknowledge that there is opportunity to grow diversity in the environmental health workforce, the UNCOVER EH Research Initiative demonstrates that 86 percent of the environmental health workforce is white. We encourage environmental health agencies to recruit and retain more people of color in this great field that strives to ensure healthful environments for *all*. Lastly, we call on members of the environmental health workforce to give voice to power – recalling guidance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” Black Lives Matter, and we stand in solidarity calling for justice against racism that will benefit communities and advance public and environmental health.

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# EHAC Accredited Student News of Note

EHAC features student and graduate news of note in these newsletters. Please send EHAC your student related success stories to Leslie at [executive.director@nehspac](mailto:executive.director@nehspac) to be featured in EHAC's newsletter.

## **2020 California State University, Northridge - Wolfson Scholar Omar Ullah Celebrated Among Six Outstanding Graduates**

This story-segment is from CSUN Today - June 20, 2020.

Of the more than 11,700 Matadors eligible to graduate from California State University, Northridge in May, six individuals were singled out for special recognition as outstanding graduating students. Ullah is a graduate of CSUN's EHAC accredited Environmental and Occupational Health Degree Program.

Among those recognized in May was Omar Ullah, this year's Wolfson Scholar, the highest honor awarded to a graduating senior. It is presented each year in memory of CSUN's first vice president, Leo Wolfson. Not only must the student have an exceptional academic record, but he or she must also have made significant contributions to CSUN or the community through co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

There's a mantra that Ullah recites to himself at times of pressure or self-doubt: "Learn for the sake of others."

"I truly feel that my privilege of pursuing higher education charges me with the responsibility of fighting for others who were never given the chance to receive a college education," he said. "So many people around the world — especially in the developing countries where my parents were born and raised, and even here in the developed world — dream of pursuing a basic education, but don't have that opportunity.

"Education is transformative empowerment," said Ullah, the first in his mother's side of the

family to go to college, “because it gives somebody the autonomy, intellectual currency and a powerful platform from which to advocate for others.”

Ullah, 24, of Palmdale, is determined to use that power to transform his community for the better.

“I want to become a primary care physician who serves traditionally underserved members of my community,” said Ullah, who earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental and occupational health, with a concentration in pre-medical studies, social justice and public health. “My goal is to build our community’s first-ever entirely community-led and community-designed primary care clinic. I want to partner with my community members and ask them what they envision in the clinic of their dreams, then build it together.”

During his time at CSUN, Ullah — who had a cumulative grade point average (GPA) during his time at CSUN of 3.94 — worked with the Monday Night Mission to provide food to the homeless on Los Angeles’ Skid Row, spent seven years as a volunteer at Antelope Valley Hospital and served as a community ambassador for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s Center for Health Equity Planning Commission, among many other roles. As part of CSUN’s BUILD PODER research training program, he served as a research assistant on two projects — one examining the effects of ethnic-racial discrimination on mental and physical health, and the other examining the social and cultural factors influencing the academic, psychological and physical well-being of ethnic minority and immigrant youth.

Currently, he is working with local food-justice advocates to establish a network of micro food pantries at mosques throughout the San Fernando Valley.

Ullah’s passion for tackling health disparities and the lack of access to healthcare among low-income communities of color is fueled by the experiences of his own working-class family. His immigrant parents — his mother is from Jalisco, Mexico, and his father is from Bihar, India — lost nearly everything, including their house and most of their belongings, during the financial collapse of 2008. Shortly thereafter, his parents were both diagnosed with debilitating chronic diseases

“Due to our insufficient healthcare coverage, I [watched] my parents suffer as their health

declined,” he said. “Because my parents couldn’t afford the cost of medical treatment, they avoided seeing the doctor — to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table. I felt a deep sense of helplessness and frustration at our broken healthcare system, which colors the experiences of countless low-income Americans in accessing healthcare every day. I knew I had to go to college to become a physician so that I could come back to my community, open a clinic and provide high-quality healthcare, regardless of ability to pay.

“Systematic poverty, injustice and racism result in poorer health outcomes for underserved communities, and perpetuate [many] of the barriers these communities face in being able to access healthcare services,” he said. “As a family physician, I aim to tackle those needs head-on, and eventually work on evidence-based public policy that uplifts and empowers underserved communities.”

He may even run for public office, Ullah said, if that’s what it takes to make a change.



Omar Ullah speaks about his Environmental Health experience at CSUN

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# Scholarship and Internship Opportunities

## JRCOSTEP Application Period: June 1, 2020 - September 30, 2020

Students in health-related undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs can train alongside active duty officers during their school breaks as part of the [Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program](#). Participants are paid, and receive health benefits, housing and travel allowances. Programs last between 30 and 120 days. Participants become inactive Public Health Service officers upon completing the program and can activate upon graduation. There is no obligation to join the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

To be eligible for JRCOSTEP, **you must have completed one of the following:**

- AT least 2 years of study in a professionally accredited baccalaureate program in one of the following disciplines: environmental health, engineering, nursing, pharmacy, physician assistant, dental hygiene, dietetics, medical laboratory technology, medical record administration, or therapy (occupational, physical or respiratory). Each degree has a specific corresponding accreditation body. **EHAC (and ABET) are the accrediting body for the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) position.**
- At least 1 year of study in a professionally accredited master's degree in nursing, physician assistant, environmental health, engineering, social work, public health, dietetics, healthcare administration, or therapy (occupational, physical, speech pathology, or audiology).

This is a fantastic opportunity for Environmental Health oriented majors at EHAC accredited degree programs. Many times, a JRCOSTEP internship has the potential to launch a career in Environmental Health. More information can be found

at <https://www.usphs.gov/students/> or questions can be emailed to [costep@hhs.gov](mailto:costep@hhs.gov). Students are encouraged to start the application process as soon as possible in order to successfully submit their application and work through the vetting process.



JRCOSTEP's in action.

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## Reports from the Field:

EHAC Congratulates EHAC Council  
Member Dr. Carolyn Harvey as the 2020  
Recipient of NEHA's Walter S.  
Mangold Award  
[Story from ECU stories](#)

The Walter S. Mangold Award recognizes and honors individuals for outstanding contributions to the advancement of the environmental health profession. It is the highest honor that the association can bestow on one of its members.



"Dr. Harvey embodies the values associated with Walter S. Mangold's legacy," said the NEHA in a news release.

Documentation of Dr. Harvey's achievements was compiled and submitted by the Kentucky Environmental Health Association (KYEHA) to a committee of judges, all prior winners themselves. The judges praised Dr. Harvey for advancing the knowledge base of environmental health practitioners in Kentucky and beyond through her work as an educator and a mentor.

"Dr. Carolyn Harvey dedicated her 50+ year career to promoting the field of environmental and occupational health science. From working in the industry to educating future EHS professionals, Dr. Harvey continued to highlight the importance of sanitarians to our communities. Through her involvement in NEHA, KYEHA, EHAC, and AEHAP she has mentored countless emerging professionals and has volunteered countless hours toward the improvement of our profession. The KYEHA Executive Board counts itself lucky to call Dr. Harvey a friend," the Board said in a statement.

Dr. Harvey earned her Bachelor of Science degree majoring in Microbiology with a minor in Chemistry from East Tennessee State University (ETU). She holds a Master of Science degree from the University of Houston-Clear Lake, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Texas School of Public Health.

Upon earning her Ph.D., Dr. Harvey entered the field of environmental health as a Microbiologist/Shellfish Sanitarian with the Texas Department of Health in Galveston. Dr. Harvey remained in Texas for the next 29 years, working in a variety of environmental health areas including engineering, compliance, training, and consulting. Dr. Harvey began her career in academia as an Assistant

Professor of Environmental Health at East Tennessee State University. There she taught industrial hygiene, ventilation, solid/hazardous waste, and air pollution in both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

In 2001, she left ETU to join the faculty of the Department of Environmental Health Science & Medical Laboratory Science at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU). At EKU, she directed the Master of Public Health Program from 2009 to 2014, held the rank of full professor, and became department chair. She taught graduate courses in ventilation, industrial hygiene, and toxicology in both the Environmental Health program and the MPH program. Dr. Harvey retired from active teaching at EKU on January 1, 2017.

The Walter S. Mangold Award is a highlight achievement for Dr. Harvey, who has already received several prestigious awards, published dozens of professional articles, and held leadership positions in multiple environmental health associations. Dr. Harvey has been a member of NEHA for almost 25 years, has served as a Technical Editor for the Journal of Environmental Health since 2011, and held the position of NEHA Board President from 2014-2015.

“As the 2020 Walter S. Mangold Award Committee Chair, I was so pleased to see a nomination submitted for Dr. Carolyn H. Harvey. Dr. Harvey has devoted more than 50 years of her life to the environmental health profession. Her professionalism, numerous individual achievements, contributions made toward improving our profession, her active involvement in NEHA and state associations, the professional positions she has held coupled with her education made her most worthy and deserving being recognized as this year’s Walter S. Mangold Award recipient,” said Craig A. Shepherd, RS/REHS, DAAS, MPH.

**EHAC Congratulates EHAC Program  
Director Dr. Milton Morris as the 2020  
Recipient of NEHA's Joe Beck Educational**

## Contribution Award

NEHA 's Announcement:

This award is given annually to a NEHA member for an educational contribution designed for the advancement, and professional development, of environmental health professionals.

The innovation created by Dr. Morris, Director of the Environmental Health Science Program at Benedict College, consisted of providing creative education and training to hundreds of mostly minority (African American) students. The students received electronic training on zoonotic diseases and environmental disasters. The innovative part of the project consisted of identifying motivated students who extended their learning by researching specific zoonotic diseases, emerging pathogens, and environmental disasters and presenting their findings through competitively evaluated research presentations.

The innovation conducted by Dr. Morris and his colleagues promoted a positive impact as students received environmental health education on methods to reduce the chances of disease vectors infesting environments. Students learned strategies to help the environment that included using preventive biodegradable larviciding agents such as oils to reduce mosquito breeding, draining infected stagnated water and removing containers and materials from at-risk environments. Students also learned ways to reduce or ameliorate harmful impacts to the environment from disasters.

Dr. Milton Morris has served as the Director of Environmental Health Science and EHAC Program Director at Benedict College in South Carolina since 1989. He has been a member of NEHA for 32 years. Dr. Morris served in the United States Army and has held leadership positions in several professional organizations, including the EHAC Council. He retired from the Medical Service Corps of the Army Reserves with the rank of lieutenant



colonel. He has written numerous articles and reports for both civilian and military publications.

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