

Submit Now for the 2025 Summer Session of NEPHIP



Applications are now open for our National Environmental Public Health Internship Program (NEPHIP) Summer Session for health departments and students. NEPHIP is a 400-hr paid internship opportunity that links environmental health undergraduate and graduate students with funded internship placements at qualified state, tribal, local, and territorial environmental public health agencies. Our internship program focuses on building the environmental health workforce by exposing

students to firsthand environmental public health work and career opportunities.

This workforce initiative supports the establishment of qualified applicant pathways to help meet current and future environmental health professional workforce needs across the nation and encourages environmental health students to consider careers in governmental environmental public health following graduation. NEPHIP is supported the National Center for Environmental Health within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through a cooperative agreement (CDC-RFA-OT18-1802).

Applications for environmental public health agencies will be accepted on a rolling basis if positions are open and available. We encourage programs to apply as soon as possible for consideration for summer 2025. Acceptances and matching are anticipated to be completed by the end of March for the summer 2025 session. Summer session internship experiences will begin in May or June and be completed by the end of August.

Environmental public health agencies benefit in many ways by hosting a NEPHIP intern:

- **Qualified and Compensated Interns:** Interns are undergraduate and graduate students from environmental health programs accredited by the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC). EHAC requires a firm educational foundation in the natural sciences of biology, chemistry, physics, and geology. Interns receive \$6,000 if they are undergraduate students and \$8,000 if they are graduate students to complete the 400-hr internship. This funding support allows interns to focus on your project.
- **Strengthen the Profession:** Participation helps build qualified applicant pathways to state, tribal, local, and territorial environmental public health agencies. This practical, hands-on internship results in graduates who are well-prepared to immediately



enter the environmental health workforce or continue their academic journeys.

- **Support and Coordination:** Participating host programs are provided with a support package valued at up to \$1,500 per student to compensate for intern-related costs. Host programs also benefit from enhanced administrative support from NEHA staff and a streamlined evaluation process.

Applications for students are also open and due by February 3. Learn more about NEPHIP at www.neha.org/nephip.

Leadership: The Hard Facts of Soft Skills

We know it is tough being a leader in environmental public health right now. That is why we developed our Leadership Webinar Series. This 4-part series focuses on leadership soft skills and includes experts who presented on the current information ecosystem, effective messaging, social and emotional skills, and working with the media. You can check out the entire webinar series on our playlist at www.neha.org/leadership-webinar-series. Each webinar is eligible for one continuing education contact hour to go toward your NEHA credential.

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The playlist includes:

- **Mal, Dis, and Mis: A Primer on the Evils of the Current Information Ecosystem:** Environmental health professionals are the chief science officers for their communities, and in that role, often encounter rumors, grifters, and conspiracy theories. What is our role in addressing these threats to public health and our national security? Learn about the 10 types of mis- and disinformation commonly encountered in environmental health. Understand the characteristics of information that are digestible for nonscientists and describe methods for developing trustworthy behaviors that will maximize your influence and standing.
- **Effective Messaging: For the Environmental and Public Health Professional:** Within environmental and public health, it is crucial to convey regulations and best practices to the public in a manner that persuades them to comply. This webinar focuses on how to establish professional relationships with external partners and gain trust so that public health is protected through individual action.
- **Social and Emotional Intelligence: Essential Skills for Managing Yourself and Working With Others:** Emotional and social intelligence are the most important determinants for individual and team success. People with high emotional intelligence are more resilient and handle complex human dynamics with greater ease. Like any other skills, emotional and social intelligence are learned and can be improved through practice. This webinar provides highlights and insight into this topic so you leave with new tools to increase these skills.
- **Meet the Media: Before Your Worst Day:** It is best to get to know your local media before a crisis. From media lists to playing favorites, this webinar will help you learn how to deal with today's ever-complicated media landscape. Learn the hard-hitting tips to help you communicate with the media in both disaster and relationship mode.

Learn more and watch the playlist at www.neha.org/leadership-webinar-series.

Environmental Health and Campus Grand Rounds

Our Environmental Health Grand Rounds is a series of virtual seminars that provide continuing education for environmental health professionals to enhance skills and knowledge and support program decision-making and best practices. The series highlights current and emerging environmental hazards and solutions. All seminars are eligible for continuing education contact hours to go toward your NEHA credential.

Do not miss the next seminar, *From Bites to Outbreaks—Responding to the Upsurge of Dengue Virus*, on January 16. The dengue virus, a mosquito-borne disease, is on the rise and has the potential to become the next global pandemic. According to the World Health Organization, we are currently experiencing the largest outbreak of dengue in world history, with >12.4 mil-

lion cases reported this year. This seminar brings together leading experts to provide you with comprehensive knowledge and actionable insights on dengue.

We also offer a Campus Grand Rounds, which provides environmental health students with an inside look at environmental health programs at state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments. Each series features a panel of environmental health professionals. Upcoming Campus Grand Rounds include:

- A Day in the Life of a Food Safety Professional: February 26
- A Day in the Life of an Epidemiologist: March 26
- A Day in the Life Working in Climate Change: April 2
- A Day in the Life of a Water Quality Expert: April 30

You can register for these seminars and view recordings of past seminars on our playlist at www.neha.org/eh-grand-rounds.

NEHA Staff Profiles

As part of our tradition, we feature new staff members in the *Journal* around the time of their 1-year anniversaries. These profiles allow you to get to know our 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 six NEHA staff members. Contact information for all NEHA staff can be found on pages 42 and 43.



Zianna Bueno

I joined NEHA in January 2024 as an accounting clerk in the Finance Department. I have an associate of science degree from the Community College of Denver and am currently pursuing a bachelor of science in finance. My background has been in administrative and accounting roles. At NEHA, I assist with accounts payable, accounts receivable, and the processing of grant reimbursements from the NEHA-FDA Retail Flexible Funding Model (RFFM) Grant Program. My goal is to deepen my knowledge of nonprofit accounting, learn about more areas of environmental health, and contribute to the growth of the organization.

Outside of work, I am passionate about sustainability and love spending time outdoors. I enjoy playing tennis, painting, and spending time with my family. I am grateful to be part of a dedicated organization that is making a meaningful impact in the world.



Molly Hannon

I came to NEHA in January 2024 as the contracts administrator in the Finance Department. In this role, I work with departments across the organization to procure goods and services and to draft and negotiate agreements with contractors. I am new to the field of environmental health, and I truly enjoy and

value collaborating with my NEHA colleagues and our exceptional contractors from whose diverse expertise and experience in environmental health I have learned so much already.

Following graduation from Northwestern University, I served as a corps member with City Year Providence and found a passion for public education that led me to pursue a master's degree in urban education policy from Brown University. In my most recent role before joining NEHA, I worked in public procurement and contract management as the director of purchasing for Providence Public School District in Providence, Rhode Island. In this role, I oversaw the daily operation and long-term strategy of the school department's purchasing. In joining NEHA, I have transitioned from public education to environmental health work but remain committed to doing work that fosters healthier communities.

My partner and I moved to Colorado in October 2023 with our cat Winifred. In my free time, I enjoy taking advantage of the great outdoor activities that Colorado has to offer, whether that is walking, hiking, or skiing. I am an avid reader and the proud host of a long-running, virtual book club.



Ashley Miller

I am thrilled to be part of the NEHA team as a senior program coordinator. My role centers around managing grant-funded programs, with a particular focus on the NEHA-FDA RFFM Program and the Retail Food Safety Regulatory Association Collaborative grants. I spend my time working with colleagues and partners to ensure our

projects are successful while finding creative ways to improve our systems and processes. What excites me most about my work is the opportunity to bring big ideas to life, using innovation and teamwork to create tangible solutions that make a real difference in protecting public health.

I hold a master of public health (MPH) and have spent the past 15 years immersed in the world of food safety. Before joining NEHA, I worked in various food safety roles for organizations such as Amazon, Mesa County Public Health, and the National Restaurant Association. These experiences helped me hone my skills in program management, cross-functional policy development, and regulatory compliance.

When not at work, I enjoy spending time outdoors, hiking and exploring the natural beauty of Colorado with my rescue pup, Sadie. I am excited to continue contributing to NEHA's mission while also being part of a community that shares my passion for environmental health.



Vi Nguyen

Toward the end of January 2024, I joined NEHA as a project coordinator for the Program and Partnership Development Department. As a project coordinator, I collaborate and foster partnerships with different individuals and organizations, working together to meet project deliverables. The projects that I coordinate and support include

workforce and leadership development, data modernization and management, and climate and health. I really appreciate the opportunity to work on such diverse projects and to meet and work with so many experts from various fields of environmental health. I hope to have more opportunities to learn and expand in climate and health.

I received my bachelor of science in environmental health from Colorado State University in 2014. I have more than 6 years of experience in environmental health but have also worked in healthcare and human services. I enjoy the simple things in life—food, family, good company, napping, cute animals, plants, and peaceful walks. Of course, as a Colorado native, I also enjoy hiking, paddle boarding, and kayaking whenever I get out of the comforts of my home.



Rachel Stokes

I am thrilled to serve as a project coordinator II in the Program and Partnership Development Department. My journey in public health has taken me from working as an environmental health specialist with the Indian Health Service—where I had the incredible opportunity to support Native American communities throughout the nation—to

deploying as an epidemiologist during the COVID-19 pandemic to support vulnerable populations along the southern U.S. border.

My passion for environmental public health sparked in middle school through an unlikely source—a science project on radon. I managed to convince my parents to allow me to test our basement for radon gas. (Thanks, Mom and Dad, for letting me turn our house into a science experiment.) This interest, however, deepened through personal experience, having grown up in a community devastated by industrial pollution. Understanding firsthand the anxiety of questioning your water and air quality shaped my commitment to ensuring other communities do not face similar uncertainties.

My academic journey includes a bachelor's degree in environmental science from Samford University and an MPH in environmental health and toxicology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. After gaining field experience, I pursued a doctorate in public health in population health analytics and decision-making.

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ing at Samford, becoming the program's inaugural graduate during the pandemic—talk about memorable timing!

When not working on environmental health projects, you can find me reading a good book, tossing frisbees with my dog, or pursuing my passion for track and field as a competitive javelin thrower. I am currently training with my sights set on a potential national title in the 2025 season—wish me luck!



Jennifer Wells

I joined the Program and Partnership Development Department as a project assistant in January 2024, where I support the National Environmental Public Health Internship Program (NEPHIP). This program provides paid internships to undergraduate and graduate students with state, tribal, local, and territorial environmental public health agencies. I

find it incredibly rewarding to be a part of the personal and educational journeys of our students, watching them deepen their understanding of environmental public health through hands-on experience. Recently, I was promoted to project coordinator, and

will now also be assisting with other initiatives including collaborating with our partners to coordinate training opportunities for environmental public health professionals.

I earned a bachelor's degree in biology from The College of New Jersey and completed two natural resource conservation internships on public lands. Afterward, I returned to New Jersey to work for The Nature Conservancy, where I monitored river water quality and planned tree-planting volunteer events. A couple of years later, I began working for a national nonprofit organization where I managed multiple internship programs in partnership with the National Park Service. I have seen firsthand how transformative internships can be in a young person's life, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to providing equitable and meaningful opportunities for passionate individuals seeking to make a positive impact on the world.

Originally from northwest New Jersey, I have lived in several fascinating places across the country and currently reside in the charming town of Geneva, New York, in the scenic Finger Lakes region. In my free time, I enjoy fostering animals with my local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), knitting projects for my family, and recharging by spending time in nature. 🌿



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