

NEHA NEWS

Part 3 of Our Webinar Series on Empowering Women Leaders

The final installment of our transformative 3-part journey—designed to equip women with the tools, skills, and confidence to excel in leadership roles within the environmental health sector—will take place on June 17. While this series is designed for women, it is open to all individuals interested in enhancing their leadership capabilities in environmental health.

- **Part 3—Celebrating Success: Building Confidence in Sharing Achievements (June 17, 1 p.m. ET):** In the final part of this series, you will learn how to confidently celebrate your accomplishments and own your successes. This session will guide you through building a personal portfolio that captures both big wins and small victories. You will gain tools to boost your professional visibility and break through the discomfort of self-promotion. Whether it is for career advancement or personal growth, think of this session as building a personal PR (public relations) strategy for yourself.

Learn more and register at www.neha.org/Empowering-Women-Leaders-in-Environmental-HealthWebinar-Series.

Application Period Open for Our Program Committees

The application period to apply for membership to any of our program committees is open from June 1 to June 30. We seek subject matter experts to provide guidance, input, and expertise for several different environmental health programs. We have seven program committees to fill: climate health, informatics, food safety, rural and frontier, vector control, private water and decentralized wastewater, and preparedness. Do not miss out—the application period is only open once a year in June. Learn more at www.neha.org/committees.

Mentorship Pilot Program

Our pilot Mentorship Program ran from September 2024 to March 2025 and represented a key milestone in our efforts to support and strengthen the environmental health workforce. For 6 months, this program paired 25 volunteer mentors with 25 mentees, promoting professional growth, leadership development, and meaningful connections throughout the field. Now complete, the program has left a lasting impact on participants and provides focus for similar future initiatives.

Designed to support early-career professionals, the program encouraged mentees to define clear learning objectives and take an active role in shaping the mentorship experience. This work included completing a self-reflection worksheet at the start of the program, establishing meeting schedules, and identifying specific goals such as career guidance, technical skill development, and expanding professional networks. The emphasis on intentional goal setting helped ensure productive, personalized engagement between mentoring pairs.

Mentees reported significant benefits. Many described the experience as transformative, noting increased confidence, a better understanding of the field, and clearer career direction. In several cases, mentees pursued new roles, obtained NEHA credentials, or took on public speaking opportunities with the encouragement of their mentors. The program empowered participants to take initiative, seek feedback, and embrace a growth mindset—essential traits for long-term success in the profession.

Mentors also expressed strong satisfaction. In addition to sharing their expertise and supporting the next generation, mentors appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their career journeys. The mutual learning aspect of the program was a key strength. Some mentors indicated that the conversations led them to consider novel approaches in their work or reaffirmed their commitment to the field.

A majority of participants described their mentoring relationships as highly valuable. According to post-survey data, 94% of mentees planned to continue the relationship with their mentor after the program concluded, and >80% of mentees indicated they would recommend the program to others. Participants cited professional development, networking, and increased self-awareness as the most significant benefits.

Despite its success, more than one half of participants felt the 6-month duration was too short. Many expressed that more time would allow mentoring relationships to deepen and goals to be more fully realized. As a result, we plan to extend the next program cycle to 9 months.

In addition to one-on-one mentoring, participants were encouraged to engage with our broader offerings—including webinars, credentialing opportunities, and our online Community platform—to complement the learning process. Many found these resources helpful in broadening their perspective and connecting with others beyond their mentoring pair.

As we look ahead, expansion and refinement of the program are already underway. Future iterations aim to include graduate students and additional professionals from industry to diversify the participant pool. Plans also include virtual networking events, additional training resources for mentors, and potential continuing education credit for participants. A digital badge or recognition system is also being explored to incentivize and celebrate participation.

The success of our Mentorship Program lies not only in quantitative outcomes but also in the professional growth and leadership it fostered. Mentees gained direction, mentors found purpose in giving back, and the environmental health profession benefited from renewed connections and shared knowledge. Several mentees have already expressed interest in returning as mentors, demonstrating the program's long-term sustainability and value.

By investing in mentorship, we reinforce our mission to build, sustain, and empower an effective environmental health workforce. As the program evolves, we will continue to provide a vital framework for supporting professionals at every stage of their careers, cultivating the next generation of environmental health leaders. 🌸