

Telling Missouri's Public Health Stories



Crossing the Finish Line

In mid-July 2018 the Missouri Environmental Health Association (MEHA) and the Missouri Milk, Food and Environmental Health Association (MMFEHA) reached the finish line on a multi-year effort to officially merge their two organizations. MEHA President Brian Keller said in a letter to members that the merger will allow the organization to "more effectively support and serve our members, Missouri environmental health professionals, and the public."

Keller shared with #HealthierMO, "I had a chance to speak to other state affiliate leaders in addition to NEHA leadership about the merger at the 2018 NEHA AEC. All who I spoke to expressed their support and encouragement as we succeed in advancing Environmental Health professionalism in the state of Missouri and be a positive example for all to see."

Representatives from both MEHA and MMFEHA have been actively engaged in the #HealthierMO Professional Organizations group. During their July meeting, MEHA representatives expressed appreciation for the value gained through collaboration with other professional organizations.

Former MEHA Vice President Ryan Tilley regularly attends the Professional Organizations meetings and said, "It has been my honor and an amazing opportunity to represent MEHA at the ongoing Professional Organizations group. We have been very busy and showing no signs of slowing down as we prepare for our strategic planning session. The level of collaboration in bringing together all the associations is unlike anything we have seen in a long time. While the challenges are real, it's an exciting time to work in public health and affect long-lasting change. Specifically, emphasizing that environmental health is a fundamental core function of public health and not to be forgotten."

Tilley added an encouraging message for his peers, "For the current Environmental Public Health Specialists out there, I want them to know that the MEHA board is working for them. We are working to improve the image of the profession, the skills of the practitioner, number of Specialist, and the impact we can have statewide. We are stronger together and united for public health."

The Professional Organizations group hopes lessons learned during the MEHA merger will prove informative as the group navigates its own alignment process.



To learn more about the Missouri Environmental Health Association, visit their new website at mehamo.org.

The #HealthierMO initiative is seeking more stories like this one that demonstrate how partners in Missouri's greater public health system are working together to transform the future of public health in our state and offer every resident the opportunity for a healthier life. If you have a story to share, contact us at HealthierMO.org or email Communications Coordinator Jaci McReynolds at jmcreynolds@healthiermo.org. Learn more about the initiative and how you can get involved at HealthierMO.org or on Facebook @[HealthierMO](https://www.facebook.com/HealthierMO) or Twitter @[aHealthierMO](https://twitter.com/aHealthierMO).