

Greetings AMPHO, MEHA, and MPHA members!

Confluence is excited to share updates from all of its associations about the work that has been done in 2023 with you, our members.

Thank you for being a member, it is your involvement and support that makes this work possible!

Confluence Public Health Alliance

We celebrate the birth of Olin Casper, healthy baby boy of Lisa Dworak-Casper, executive director of Confluence Public Health Alliance, and Chuck Casper. Congratulations!

To recap, the goal of coming together and creating Confluence Public Health Alliance was to align the priorities of our Montana environmental and public health associations, to share resources, and to coordinate activities. Confluence Public Health Alliance has existed for one year, seven months, and needs continued membership in the professional associations (AMPHO, MEHA, MPHA) to continue to move forward in the journey to be a robust umbrella organization. During 2023, two dedicated staff have continued to work to build infrastructure to benefit the associations.

This year, joint committees have been created to work in the areas of governance and risk, communications, and resource development. These newly formed committees have at least one representative from each association. The governance and risk committee is looking at memorandums of agreement between the associations, insurance, board terms and by-law alignment. The communications committee is working on a plan for continued connection with members, and resource development has identified funding opportunities. Hopefully others will

volunteer as subject matter experts and/or have interest in the topic area and commit to serve for a year, meeting every other month. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, please contact kayla.chipongjian@cphamt.org. Two established committees, finance and the advocacy and policy committee are continuing to meet and work on established goals and objectives.

As we move into the next several months, it is my personal commitment to make sure that Lisa has time with her newborn son. Kayla will be our glue to hold operations together and our committed boards and committees will continue with their work plans and tasks. In closing, Confluence Public Health Alliance will continue to play a vital role in supporting our member associations who are working to protect and improve the health of our Montana Communities.

- *Shawn Hinz, Confluence Public Health Alliance Board President*

Your Confluence Public Health Alliance Board Members are:

Shawn Hinz, Board President | Retired

Drenda Niemann, Treasurer | Health Officer, Lewis & Clark Public Health

Sarah Robbin, Vice President | Registered Sanitarian

Jenn McCully, AMPHO Officer | Public Health Director, Lincoln County Health Department

Emilie Sayler, AMPHO Officer | Public Health Director, Madison County

Valerie Stacey, MEHA Officer | Land Use Sanitarian, Lewis & Clark County

Jenna Fisher, MEHA Officer | Retail Food Lead, DPHHS Health and Food Safety

Melissa Henderson, MPHA Officer | Director Health Promotion, RiverStone Health

Damian Chase-Begay, MPHA Officer | Health Officer, Missoula City-County Health Department

Association of Montana Public Health Officials

The AMPHO Board has continued to support important work over the last year. AMPHO continued to stay involved in the 2023 Legislative Session, defending foundational pillars of public health including: clean air, clean environment, and communities safe from vaccine-preventable diseases.

AMPHO also continued to support benefits for members through acting as a voice for public health at the Capitol, AMPHO Small and Large County calls, and professional development for members. This year, the AMPHO mentorship program for lead locals was started once again, and mentees have participated in monthly learning modules and cohort calls since its kickoff at the Confluence 2023 Conference.

August's learning module will be available to all AMPHO members, which will discuss Building Support for Health Department Leadership. [Register now](#).

Your AMPHO current Board Members are:

Jenn McCully, AMPHO Chair | Public Health Director, Lincoln County Health Department

Melissa Moyer, Vice Chair | Public Health Director, Teton County

Drenda Niemann, Past Chair | Health Officer, Lewis & Clark Public Health

Dr. Laurel Desnick, Treasurer | Health Officer, Park County

Lori Christenson, Director | Health Officer, Gallatin City-County

Amy Shaw, Director | Public Health Director, Pondera County

Stefanie Harrington, Director | Public Health Director, Carter County

Pam Hanna, Director | Public Health Director, Jefferson County

Brittney Petersen, Director | Administrator, Richland County Health Department

AMPHO has two vacant positions:

Director, Tribal

Director, Tribal

Please contact Jenn McCully (jmccully@libby.org) for more information if you are interested in one of these positions!

Montana Environmental Health Association

The Montana Environmental Health Association has accomplished a lot in the last year, particularly during the 2023 legislative session, through efforts organized and supported by Confluence Public Health Alliance.

MEHA and Confluence, through efforts by outstanding MEHA members, successfully defended foundational pillars of public and environmental health including clean air and clean environment. Specific achievements included blocking all attempts to weaken the Clean Indoor Air Act and defund Tobacco Use Prevention attempts and mitigating the worst of the impacts to clean water and sanitation subdivision review, which either died in the process or were successfully amended.

This year MEHA was able to send more delegates to the National Environmental Health Association conference than ever before by taking advantage of recent DPHHS PHSD scholarship opportunities. These scholarships allowed MEHA members to meet other Environmental Health professionals from around the country and attend a variety of Environmental Health focused educational sessions. MEHA would like to extend a heartfelt "Thank You!" to our Regional NEHA rep Rachele Blackham, as well as DPHHS PHSD for this excellent opportunity!

Your MEHA Current Board Members are:

Dustin Schreiner, President | Registered Sanitarian, Montana State University

Sadie Overlie, President Elect | Registered Sanitarian, Montana DPHHS Food & Consumer Safety

Anna Baxter, Vice President | Registered Sanitarian, Lake County Public Health

Sarah Robbin, Treasurer & Past President | Registered Sanitarian

Kira Flagstead, Secretary | Registered Sanitarian, RiverStone Health

Valerie Stacey, Director | Registered Sanitarian, Lewis & Clark County

John Palacio, Director | Director and Registered Sanitarian, Ravalli County Environmental Health

MEHA's Board of Directors currently has two vacant positions:

Alternate Treasurer/Director

Director

If you are interested in one of these positions, please contact Dustin Schreiner (dustin.schreiner@montana.edu) for more information.

Montana Public Health Association

The MPHA Board has been working hard to get organized for the year ahead. We have been working on updating our by-laws to be more consistent with current practices (a draft will be sent to members for review and approval in the coming months), attending the American Public Health Association President's Meeting to learn about how we can strengthen our association, and thinking strategically about our communications, resources, and Board and member makeup.

Your MPHA Current Board Members are:

Board President: A.C. Rothenbuecher, Community Health Promotion Division Administrator from Lewis and Clark Public Health (Term: 4/23-12/24)

President-elect: Kristi Akelstad, HIV/STD/HCV Section Supervisors, MT DPHHS (Term: 4/23-12/24)

Immediate Past President: Emily Colomeda, Health Services Director, Lake County Health Department (Term: 4/23-12/24)

Secretary: Desiree Restad, Independent Public Health Consultant, (Term: Present-2025)

Treasurer: Shawn Hinz, Retired, (Term: Present-2025)

Vice President Region 1: Lynn Miller, Director, Valley County Health Department, (Term: Present-2025)

Vice President Region 3: Melissa Henderson, Director, Health Promotion Division, RiverStone Health, (Term: Present - 2026)

Vice President Region 5: Holly Jordt, Program Officer, Montana Public Health Institute, (Term: Present - 2025)

Tribal Liaison: Niki Graham, Director of Operations, Montana Public Health Training Center, (Term: Present - 2026)

DPHHS Representative: Terry Ray, Public Health Systems Improvement Coordinator, Montana DPHHS, (Term: Appointed on even years)

We have some Board vacancies and would love to hear from you. Are you interested in taking a leadership role in the Montana Public Health Association?

- **Vice President Region 2** (Cascade, Pondera, Toole, Glacier, Teton, Chouteau, Hill, Liberty, and Blaine counties, Blackfeet, Rocky Boy and Fort Belknap Reservations)
- **Vice President Region 4** (Lewis and Clark, Powell, Granite, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, Beaverhead, Madison, Jefferson, Broadwater, Meagher, Gallatin, and Park counties)
- Are you interested in helping Confluence on resource development (funding, membership, grants)? **We are seeking a representative for the Confluence PH Alliance Committee on resource development.** If that sounds like you, consider submitting your interest for a vacant role.
- **Historian**

Interested in a VP position or the Historian role? Reach out to A.C. Rothenbuecher at acrothen@gmail.com or Kristi Akelstad at Aklestad, Kristi Kristi.Aklestad@mt.gov .

Confluence Public Health Alliance: Staff Update

One year ago, Confluence was preparing for its first strategic planning meeting, and in the months since, has planned and executed its first joint Confluence conference, successfully defended foundational pillars of public health in the 2023 legislative session, re-invigorated the AMPHO lead local mentorship program, transitioned to a new member management platform, and launched a joint website.

The new joint website, <https://www.confluencepha.org/>, is the home site for AMPHO, MEHA, and MPHA, and will feature upcoming webinars, learning and professional development opportunities, and other exciting announcements. Access to the new membership portal is also available through the website.

Connected Community continues to be an important resource for staff as they share information, updates, and opportunities with membership. The platform serves as a place for public and environmental health professionals to connect, ask and answer questions, and access resources.

Confluence staff has also been happy to support multiple national conference scholarships, made possible with generous support from DPHHS' Public Health & Safety Division. Montana delegations were sent to the NEHA Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition, virtual attendance was sponsored to NACCHO 360, and the scholarship for attendance to APHA's Annual Meeting & Expo closed on August 10.

Confluence's work would not be possible without the passion and support of its members. Thank you for the investment of your time, support, and membership dues that go toward making this important work possible.

Public Health Partner Spotlight



Montana Families for Vaccines

Montana Families for Vaccines is having a screening on Dr. Maurice Hilleman (developed 40 vaccines, from Montana!) on August 30. Info is linked on the [mtfamilies4vax](#) Instagram, or contact Kiely Lammers (kiely@mtfamiliesforvaccines.org) to learn more.



Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate

Montana Health Professionals for a Health Climate will be hosting a series of webinars from September 2023 through May 2024 on climate and health.

[Read More](#)

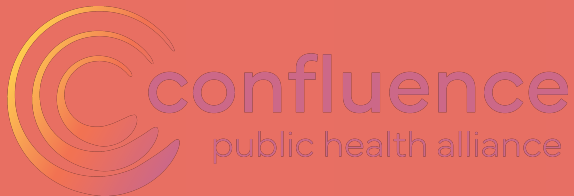


Montana Department of Agriculture

Montana Department of Agriculture is hosting the Montana Rodent Academy, a hands on workshop where attendees will work with vertebrate pest professionals to get hands on experience.

[Read More](#)

passionate about public and environmental health!



Confluence Public Health Alliance

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NEW! joint website:

www.confluencepha.org

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