

Hello SECP Members!

In an effort to show you what the SECP can do for you and highlight the accomplishments of our incredible members, we will be doing a regular “Where are they now?” segment with our former leaders and members. We hope this will help provide insight on how SECP and AIHA can help to promote and advance your skills and career, while offering a window into some of the pathways we can take in the IH field.

We are so pleased to present our first interview with Nicole Greeson, CIH; many thanks for Nicole for her time, service, and enthusiasm!

Name: Nicole Greeson, CIH

Title: Division Director of Occupational Health and Safety, Duke University and Health System

Years of Experience: 20 years of IH experience

Affiliations: AIHA and ABIH Board Member, involvement with ACGIH, CSHEMA and NSC

Q: Can you please describe your previous activities within SECP?

A: I was an active Students and Early Career Professionals (SECP) Committee member from 2007 - 2019 and SECP Mentoring Program South Regional Director (before the mentoring program was moved to a new, separate Mentoring and Professional Development Committee) from 2011-2014.

Q: What did you get out of the SECP and how do you think others can be an active, productive members?

A: *Probably the greatest thing I got out of my SECP involvement was the networking with other early career professionals, many of whom I still keep in contact with today and consider colleagues. I think others can be active/productive members by participating in meetings and volunteering for projects, even if they are very short-term micro-volunteer opportunities. Every little bit helps the volunteer group and those whom that project ultimately serves, and also provides an opportunity for the member to expand their professional network, learn soft skills and/or technical skills, and may lead to larger volunteer opportunities where they could be a project lead or committee officer, both of which provide leadership opportunities that some early career professionals do not have with their employer at the same stage of their career.*

Q: What has been your involvement with AIHA and its subcommittees?

A: I am currently serving as AIHA national Treasurer and chair the Finance Committee, and while as a Board member I have to step back from my active participation in many of the volunteer groups for which I previously contributed, I am still a corresponding member of quite a few so that I can stay up-to-date with current activities. The Legionella Body of Knowledge Development Task Force on which I served just completed our work and published our framework document on the AIHA website. I am serving on the AIHA Strategic Planning Task Force that has just convened to look at any tweaks to our existing strategic plan and evolve it into the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. I am also a member of the Carolinas AIHA Local Section.

Q: What advice would offer students and early career professional regarding volunteering with AIHA and getting involved in the IH community?

A: Pick a volunteer group that covers a topic of interest to you and join! *As a board member, I hear a lot of feedback from volunteer group leadership that they would love more new members, particularly students or early career professionals_who have a lot of energy and passion and who can provide a fresh perspective. Don't be intimidated if you are not an "expert" in that area. Many members join a volunteer group to LEARN from experts and peers and to network with others. Start to attend meetings and then volunteer to work on a project of interest where you can continue to build that network, learn, and share with others. You may be creating valuable lifelong professional relationships!*

Q: *What has helped you most in your career? What do you wish you had done when you were a student and/or early career professional that would have helped you now?*

A: It's hard to single out one thing that has helped me most in my career because there have been many things that helped shape where I am today. *Attending AIHA's Future Leaders Institute (FLI) in 2007 was a significant piece, so I would encourage those who have not attended and are interested to apply the next time it's offered. As for what I wish I had done when I was a student or early career professional, obtaining a mentor outside of my university and employers for an external perspective would have been great, but I really didn't know how to go about obtaining one, which is one of the reasons I put a lot of effort into establishing the AIHA Mentoring Program some years ago. I was fortunate to have organically obtained informal mentorship through my volunteer efforts within AIHA, and I wish had joined as a student rather than waiting until I was in the workforce.*

Q: *What would you want the current SECP members to know about AIHA, SECP, etc that can help them get the most out of their membership and volunteer activities?*

A: I have found *AIHA to be a very welcoming community as an industrial hygienist and have found many ways that individuals can give back and also develop leadership and technical skills. SECP, in particular, due to its not-so-technical nature and many members who are not yet subject matter experts, offers a non-intimidating, low pressure, high reward opportunity for involvement to develop your network of peers, benchmark and learn from others, and develop your skills. Don't be afraid to then join a technical committee or working group! These groups really want you to participate; they want to engage the next generation of IH professionals. I think it's safe to say that all of the board liaisons would be more than happy to connect you with any volunteer group in which you would like to get more involved if that would ease your transition to branching beyond SECP.*

Q: *Anything else you would like us to know or share?*

A: Just that I am happy to communicate individually with anyone who has questions about how they can get more involved!*

*Please contact Nicole via email: Nicole.greeson@duke.edu