



Greetings Pittsburgh Local Section of AIHA!

I hope everyone is having a safe and healthy summer season.

As I approach the end of my term as section president, I want to express my thanks to a number of key individuals and a hope for an exciting future. I am greatly indebted to the members of our executive committee, Dane Mitcheson, CIH, CSP, CHST (incoming president), Renee Cowell, CSP, CIH (secretary), Frank Pokrywka, EdD, CIH (treasurer), Laura Allen, MS, CIH (past president), Darrick Bertig, CIH, CSP, CUSA, MS (director), and Tom Blank, CIH, CSP, FAIHA (director). They all played vital roles in continuing to move our chapter forward throughout the year. Though Renee, Laura, and Tom are departing the executive committee, I thank them for their contributions and support over the years. At our summer business meeting, we will be welcoming to the 2023-2024 executive committee Barry Momyer, CIH (president-elect), Carol Delfino, CIH, CSP (secretary), and Rona Smeak, Ph.D., CSP (director).

I particularly want to acknowledge your future president, Dane Mitcheson. As president-elect, he has also served as the section's 2022-2023 Program Chair. In this role, Dane ensured that we had an active and educational series of meetings this past year. I hope each of you had the opportunity to join at least one of the many meetings, whether it was touring Carrie Furnace, gaining an appreciation for life during the 1948 Donora smog disaster, learning about heat stress research at NIOSH, or meeting AIHA's president at our president's luncheon.

I also want to remind every member about the local section's AIHA eLearning subscription. As a member of the Pittsburgh section, you have access to five online training modules and webinars on the topics of lab safety, risk communication, biological hazards, hazard recognition, and workplace violence. I hope that you find these on-demand courses both an easy and interesting means of getting those crucial continuing education credits.

Finally, I would like to thank Christy (corresponding secretary) for her skilled and efficient management of many of the section's functions.

I hope to see you at the summer business meeting and future AIHA meetings!

LT Tim Beck, MPH

Next Event: July 26, 2023 - Local Section Summer Business Meeting



Register now for the Pittsburgh AIHA Summer Business Meeting that will be held Wednesday, July 26 from 11:00 AM to ~1:00 PM at [Smokey Bones in Robinson, PA.](#) All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Register online: [2023-07-26 Business Meeting](#)

Meeting Highlights - Donora Smog Museum Presentation / Tour

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the worst air pollution disaster in U.S. history. In an effort to learn more about this significant event, the Pittsburgh Local Section headed to the Donora Historical Society and Smog Museum in Donora, Pennsylvania. During the presentation, the chapter members learned how the town of Donora was founded, what life was like in Donora and Webster when over eight thousand people worked at the massive American Steel and Wire Company Donora Works, and most importantly what transpired around Halloween in 1948. The 1948 Donora Smog Disaster and its aftermath had a wide-reaching effect on public health and the environment. Its story even ties in early pioneers of industrial hygiene including Industrial Hygienist Dr. Philip Drinker and Toxicologist Dr. Mary Ochsenshirt Amdur.

The Pittsburgh Local Section would like to thank Mr. Brian Charlton and Dr. Dave Lonich for teaching us about the history of the [1948 Donora Smog Disaster](#). We would also like to thank Mr. Mark Pawelec for coordinating the event as well as the luncheon at the Early Bird Diner that followed the tour. Finally, we would like to thank Natalie Gaydos, CIH for suggesting this exciting event.

If you would like to see the [Donora Historical Society and Smog Museum](#) summary of the June 14th event, **please click on this link.** **As part of the 75th anniversary remembrance of the event, the society has a symposium planned for October.** If you are interested in volunteering to participate in this symposium, please reach out to Mr. Mark Pawelec at donorahistoricalociety@gmail.com.



Pittsburgh AIHA Local Section Scholarship Recipient Named



The Pittsburgh AIHA is happy to announce that [Sophia Naugle from Slippery Rock University](#) is the recipient of the Pgh. AIHA Local Section scholarship awarded through the American Industrial Hygiene Foundation (AIHF). Sophia was recognized along with all AIHF scholarship recipients at the 2023 AIHce Conference.

Sophia is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Safety Management and a minor in Leadership. She also serves as the Social Media coordinator for the SRU Student AIHA Chapter. Sophia is spending the summer working as an intern at DAVIS Construction.

Congratulations to Sophia! [Click here to see Sophie's THANK YOU Letter to the Pittsburgh AIHA!](#)

Congratulations to SRU Graduates and AIHA Student Section Leaders!

Jacob Brand (President) and Hannah Roberts (Vice-President) recently graduated from the SRU Safety Management Program on May 6, 2023.

Jacob not only received a degree in safety, but also earned a second major in Professional Spanish. Jacob was a member of the Dean's List his entire time at SRU and was not only the President of AIHA Student Section, but he was also the President of the Spanish Club, secretary of the Men's Club Soccer Team, and an active member of the SRU ASSP Student Section. He is Interning in Springdale, PA with PPG Industries, as a part of the Environmental Health and Safety team. Jacob is returning to SRU in the fall to begin work on an MBA.

Hannah Roberts, who was the AIHA Student Section Vice-President/Treasurer, was also a member of the Dean's list during her academic journey and was an active member in the SRU ASSP Student Section. She assisted in the research project focusing on noise during Division II basketball games and co-presented this research at the WPA ASSP Conference. Hannah is spending the summer Interning with Bozzuto Construction Company in Alexandria, Virginia. Her future goals are to continue in the construction industry, and eventually do some environmental work.



Slippery Rock graduated approximately 40 students on May 6, 2023, and approximately 44 students will be complete August 2023. Congratulations and good luck to you all

We are happy to announce the new and exciting group of SRU AIHA Student Section leaders for academic year 2023-2024:

- President: Shayla Wilkinson
- Vice President: Annalyse Hoover
- Secretary: Emily Szczesny
- Treasurer: Tanner Williams
- Social Media: Sophia Naugle

Submitted by:

Dr. Rona Smeak, PhD, CSP, Associate Professor, Slippery Rock University

Pittsburgh AIHA Historical Page Updates

Take a minute to check out the [Pittsburgh AIHA Historical page](#) for a few additions (submitted by Frank Pokrywka, Pittsburgh AIHA):

- **Jonas Salk Legacy Exhibit at Pitt Public Health**
- **Peter Josef Safar, The Father of CPR**
- **Did You Know? ACGIH History....**

Do you have something to contribute to the Historical Page? Please email: PittsburghAIHAhistory@gmail.com.

Pittsburgh AIHA Member Named Recipient of the AIHA John M. White Award



Pittsburgh AIHA Member, [Zane Frund, Ph.D.](#), Executive Director, R&D Dept. at MSA Innovation was named the recipient of the National AIHA [John M. White Award](#), presented by the AIHA Respiratory Protection Committee. National AIHA CEO, Lawrence Sloan noted "This is a testament to your leadership in driving continuous improvement toward improving the health and well-being of workers and the communities where they work and live."

Zane's achievement will be recognized by the National AIHA in various ways, including via press release, on the AIHA website, the Catalyst online community, and at AIHce EXP 2023.

[The John M. White Award](#) was established by the [AIHA Respiratory Protection Committee](#) to encourage scientific and application-oriented research in respiratory protection.

CONGRATULATIONS ZANE!!

Meeting Review - April 18, 2023 "Physiological and Ergonomic Studies on Prototype Firefighter PPE at the NPPTL NIOSH Human Performance Laboratory"



With summer around the corner, the Pittsburgh Local Section headed to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) to learn about cutting-edge research being led by Dr. W. Jon Williams on heat stress. Dr. Williams is a Senior Research Physiologist for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) who currently serves as the Vice Chair of the AIHA Thermal Stress Working Group. Even more impressive than Dr. Williams' resume is his research. During the seminar with our local section, he discussed the team of scientists that he leads to study the physiological responses of wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) and the means to mitigate these responses. The physiological responses that they study include

cardiovascular strain, heat stress, cooling technologies, and pharmacological interventions to improve PPE and reduce the physiological strain from wearing PPE. They also focus on the ergonomic impacts of PPE. The research that was presented to the section is truly innovative and will improve the lives of workers and first responders in the future.

The Pittsburgh Local Section would like to thank [Jon Williams, PhD., Research Physiologist, National Personal Protective Technology Lab](#) for inviting us to NIOSH, sharing his research with us, and showing us one of his labs. We would also like to thank Matt Zock, CIH for coordinating the event at NIOSH on April 18, 2023.

Finally, we would like to thank all the following members for attending this event:

- Darrick Bertig-FirstEnergy Corporation
- Warren Houseman-ENTACT, LLC
- Julie Panko-ToxStrategies, Inc.
- Frank Pokrywka-KTA-Tator, Inc.
- Bernard Sersevic-Fluor-Bettis Power Laboratory
- Michael Swintek-Eastern Alliance Insurance Group
- Edward Ligus-Draeger
- Matt Zock-Amazon
- Carol Delfino-Delfino Health & Safety
- Dane Mitcheson-FedEx Ground
- Raj Dharmarajan-AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Timothy Beck-CDC/NIOSH
- Sarmed Shareef-University of Pittsburgh
- Cynthia Kuhlman-SKC Inc.
- Leah Tipton-Mine Safety and Health Administration
- Fred McGuigan-Risk Assessment Services, LLC
- Olivia Roberts-University of Pittsburgh
- Ryan Titus-WVU Industrial Hygiene
- Joe Marini-University of Pittsburgh
- Sergio Caporali Fihlo-West Virginia University
- Emily Smith-West Virginia University
- Anna Dzuricky-MSA Safety
- Kayleigh Fisher-MSA Safety
- Marco Tekelenburg-MSA Safety
- Ryan Lattner-Naval Nuclear Laboratory

By Dane Mitcheson, CIH, CSP, President-Elect, Pgh. AIHA, Photos submitted by Matt Zock, CIH, Past President, Pgh. AIHA

Pittsburgh AIHA 2023-2024 Executive Committee Selected



Following the recent Local Section Election, we would like to congratulate the following Pittsburgh AIHA members who will begin their term of office this summer!

President-Elect: [Barry Momyer, CIH - AM Health and Safety, Inc.](#)

Director: [Rona Smeak, Ph.D, CSP - Slippery Rock University](#)

Secretary: [Carol Delfino, CIH, CSP - Delfino Health & Safety, LLC](#)

Thank you to current Committee members, Tim Beck who will end his term as President, to be replaced by current President-elect Dane Mitcheson who will serve as President through July 2024. Frank Pokrywka remains as Treasurer, and Darrick Bertig remains as Director, each through July 2024.

A big thank you to all who participate and volunteer for the Pittsburgh AIHA!

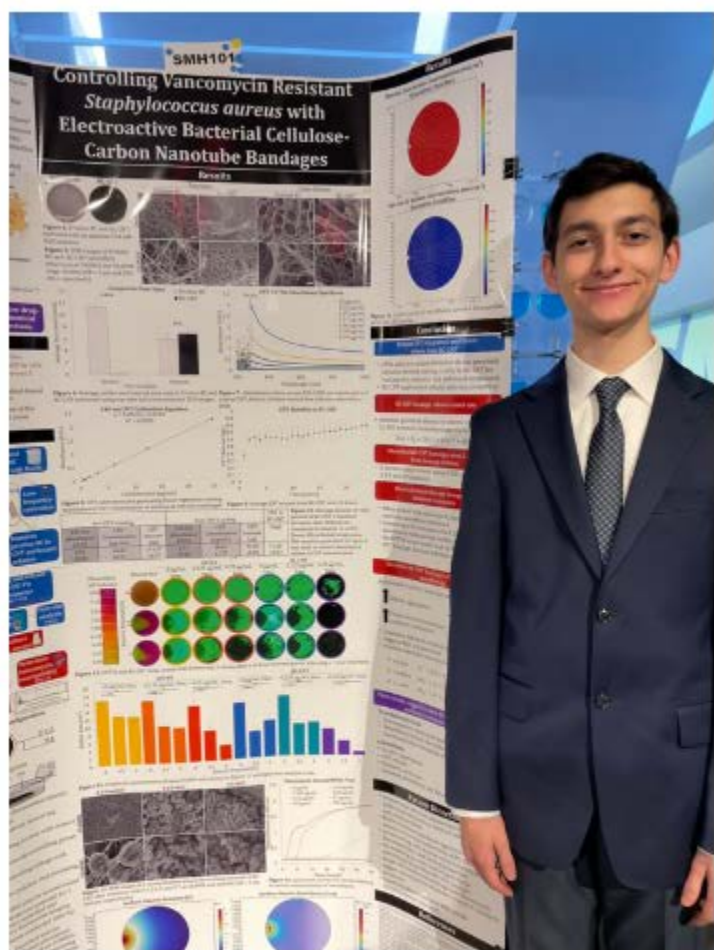
2023 Pgh. Regional Science & Engineering Fair - Pittsburgh AIHA Award Recipients

Special thanks to Pgh. AIHA Secretary, Frank Pokrwyka, Ed.D, CIH, who was the lone sponsor judge for the 2023 annual science fair held on March 29, 2023 at the Carnegie Science Center. This year's Pgh. AIHA Science Fair award recipients are presented below. Each student received a \$500 award sponsored by the Pittsburgh Local Section. Congratulations to these talented high school students and their teachers!



Aidan Hall, Mt. Lebanon Sr. High School
Energy Storage Utilizing Electrolysis
Aidan's teacher is Kyle Tilger

While renewable energy sources solve the major problems associated with fossil fuels, there is one major issue with renewables: their intermittency in energy production. If the world is to depend on renewable energy, vast amounts of energy storage must be made available when renewables aren't producing electricity. A promising means of energy storage is the electrolysis of water. This process starts by using excess renewable energy during times of high production to perform electrolysis. This reaction splits the H_2O into hydrogen and oxygen, and the hydrogen is then stored in tanks until the energy is needed. To recover the electricity, the hydrogen is run through a fuel cell, generating electricity. The goal of my experiment was to find the efficiency of this process and to compare it to different methods of energy storage. I started by finding the efficiency of an electrolysis device. To do this, I measured the number of joules put into the system through an electrical current. This was then compared to the number of joules contained in the hydrogen that was produced, with a calculated efficiency of 75%. I then tested how to store the hydrogen. I forced compressed hydrogen into a container, and I measured the pressure over time. There was only a slight reduction in pressure, showing the viability of energy storage. The efficiency of electrolysis and the ability to store hydrogen over long periods of time show that energy storage utilizing electrolysis is a practical option.



Daniel Levin, Pittsburgh Allderdice High School

Controlling Vancomycin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* with Electroactive Bacterial Cellulose-Carbon Nanotube Composites

Daniel's Teacher is Janet Waldeck

Bacterial resistance to antibiotics outpaces drug discovery, as researchers have not discovered a new class of antibiotics since 1984. One of these bacteria, *Staphylococcus aureus*, infects over one million people in the U.S. every year. *S. aureus* can form biofilms that harbor metabolically dormant persister cells that do not respond to current treatments. This study applied electrochemical therapy through bacterial cellulose-carbon nanotube composites to eradicate vancomycin-resistant *S. aureus*. *Komagataeibacter sucrofermentans* was cultured to produce a bacterial cellulose (BC) membrane at the air-media interface. Then, carboxyl-functionalized multi-walled carbon nanotubes (CNTs) were loaded into purified BC with surfactants, low-frequency sonication, and rotational incubation to create BC-CNT composites with high electrical conductivity. Chronoamperometry was used to standardize voltage potentials of the BC-CNT electrode, allowing low-level currents to flow between two terminal electrodes. Quantified fluorescent imaging of GFP-expressing cells demonstrated that electrified BC-CNT can inhibit *S. aureus* from forming biofilms. Bactericidal efficacy significantly improved when a 3.125 µg/mL vancomycin solution was added to the treatment (MIC of 12.5 µg/mL). Phenol red indicates oxidation and electrochemically driven water hydrolysis at the working electrode, which could be a killing mechanism. These results suggest a new treatment for overcoming drug-resistant *S. aureus* infection.

Meeting Review - Pittsburgh AIHA President's Luncheon with Donna Heidel, MS, CIH, FAIHA

The Pittsburgh Local Section would like to thank the National AIHA President Donna Heidel, MS, CIH, FAIHA (Global Principal Industrial Hygienist - Amazon) for addressing our local section on the current and future direction of the AIHA. All the local section members in attendance had an opportunity to chat with Ms. Heidel about the AIHA and/or the profession in general. During the presentation, Ms. Heidel highlighted some of the great work being done by members of our local section on a national level. She also emphasized the excellent job being done by our local section including the development of the student chapters at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), Slippery Rock University (SRU), and West Virginia University (WVU). Immediately following her presentation, she held a question-and-answer session and some of our local chapter members had a chance to highlight some of the incredible projects that they are actively leading. **Donna was kind enough to share her presentation with the Pittsburgh AIHA -- you can view it HERE: [Pittsburgh LS Update March 2023](#)**



The Pittsburgh Local Section would also like to thank Matt Zock, CIH and Christy Kirsch for coordinating the event at the LeMont Restaurant on March 9, 2023. In addition, we would like to say a special thank you to Dr. Deanna Kiska and U.S. Micro-Solutions, Inc. for being the event's drink sponsor. Finally, we would like to thank everyone who sponsored or volunteered to sponsor a student to attend the event.

Thank you to all the following members for attending this event:

- Laura Allen, Stantec
- Lucinette Alvarado, SKC Inc.
- Timothy Beck, CDC/NIOSH
- John Bell, Watco Companies, LLC
- Darrick Bertig, FirstEnergy Corporation
- Chloe Croft, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Dan Davis, Skelly and Loy, Inc.
- Carol Delfino, Delfino Health & Safety
- Raj Dharmarajan, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Brooke Endress, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Zane Frund, MSA Safety
- Natalie Gaydos, PPG Industries, Inc.
- Gabriella Green, Indiana University of PA
- Donna Heidel, Amazon, American Industrial Hygiene Association
- MaryAnn Hoff, PPG Industries, Inc.
- Mark Hoover, CDC/NIOSH
- Christy Kirsch, Pittsburgh AIHA
- Dane Mitcheson, FedEx Ground
- Barry Mommyer, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Frank Pokrywka, KTA-Tator, Inc.
- Olivia Roberts, University of Pittsburgh
- Nathaniel Ruhl, Skelly and Loy, Inc.
- Parinita Sah, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Bryan Seal, Indiana University of PA
- Sarmed Shareef, University of Pittsburgh
- Rona Smeak, Slippery Rock University
- Jan Wachter, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Matt Zock, Amazon



Thanks to Dane Mitcheson for providing the meeting review. Photos provided by Frank Pokrywka, Dane Mitcheson, Sarmed Shareef, and Christy Kirsch.

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Pittsburgh AIHA Upcoming Events Calendar:

The Executive Committee of the Pittsburgh AIHA is working on the 2023 program calendar - details will be updated below and on the website as new events are scheduled.

- July 26, 2023 - Summer Business Meeting
- August 31, 2023 - TSCA Presentation - location TBD (MaryAnn Hoff, PPG / Andy Maier, Stantec)
- September 2023 - OPEN
- [October 26, 2023 - MASHA Safety Conference](#)
- November 9th or 30th, 2023 - Ventilation Presentation & Lab, Sergio Caporali-Filho, PhD, CSP, CIH - West Virginia University / Student Section
- December 2023 - Winter Business Meeting

Welcome New Members:

- Chloe Croft, Indiana University of PA
- Brooke Endress, Indiana University of PA
- Emily Szczesny, Slippery Rock University
- Tanner Williams, Slippery Rock University



E-Learning Update 2023 Subscription - Access Expires 1/1/2024

Don't forget to take advantage of the free e-learning resources available with your Pittsburgh AIHA membership. You should have received an email from National AIHA E-learning with instructions to log into your online classroom. Any questions should be directed to National AIHA E-learning at DLAssistant@aiha.org.

- [AIHA University 3-Part Webinar Series: Preparing for and Controlling Biological Hazards](#)
- [AIHA University Webinar: Research Laboratory Safety in the 21st Century](#)
- [AIHA University Webinar: Strategies for Effective Risk Communication](#)
- [AIHA University Webinar: Workplace Violence Primer and Update for the IH](#)
- [Why Don't We See the Things That Can Hurt Us? \(AIHce EXP 2022 OnDemand\)](#)



Call for Volunteers for AIHA Pittsburgh Committees

The AIHA Pittsburgh Local Section has six committees that are chaired by a volunteer appointed by the chapter's president or, in the case of the Program and Nominating committees, designated to an Executive Committee member:

- Audit
- Program
- Corporate Sponsorship
- Newsletter
- Nominating
- Historical

Currently, most of our committees are unfortunately committees of one. We would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to consider volunteering to lead or participate in a committee of interest.

Benefits of Committee Participation

- Provides an opportunity to become more involved with the LS and increase connections with your peers
- Limited time obligation with high impact on the success and future directions of the LS
- Enhanced understanding of LS operations and an 'inside look' into what serving in an executive committee position entail
- Allows individuals that are not National AIHA members a chance to serve in leadership roles outside of the Executive Committee

Our LS chapter and affiliated student chapters survive and thrive by the involvement of our members, so please do your best to stay active and contribute to the success of AIHA Pittsburgh. If you are interested in leading or participating in any of our committees, please reach out to the Executive Committee via email to info@pittsburghaiha.org.

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2022-2023 Executive Committee

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Lt. Timothy Beck, MPH
CDC/NIOSH

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Dane Mitcheson, CIH, CSP, CHST
FedEx Ground

DIRECTORS

Tom Blank, CIH, CSP, FAIHA
BWXT Technologies, Inc.

Darrick Bertig, CIH, CSP, CUSA, MS
FirstEnergy

SECRETARY

Renee Cowell, CSP
Hitachi Energy

TREASURER

Frank Pokrywka, EdD, CIH
KTA Tator, Inc.

PAST PRESIDENT

Laura Hallett Allen, MS, CIH
Stantec

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY AND WEB COORDINATOR

Christy Kirsch
Pittsburgh AIHA
412-789-4254

Local Section Committee Chairpersons

Audit Committee

- **Paula Sweitzer, CHMM, Duquesne University**

Program Committee

- **Dane Mitcheson, CIH, CSP, CHST FedEx Ground (Chair)**
- **Rona Smeak, PhD, CSP, Slippery Rock University**
- **Darrick Bertig, CIH, CSP, CUSA, MS, FirstEnergy**

Corporate Sponsorship Committee

- **Laura Hallett Allen, MS, CIH, Stantec**

Newsletter Committee

- **Christy Kirsch, Pgh AIHA**

Nominating Committee

- **Laura Hallett Allen, MS, CIH, Stantec**

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- MSA Safety
- Premier Safety & Service, Inc.
- Risk Assessment Services, LLC
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*Thank You
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The Pittsburgh AIHA is seeking 2023 Corporate Sponsors - For \$200 your company receives two Pittsburgh AIHA Local Section Memberships, a listing on the [Corporate Sponsors page](#), a listing on the [Consultants List page](#) (if applicable), homepage weblink, and recognition in the Local Section newsletter.



Please consider supporting the Pittsburgh AIHA as a Corporate Sponsor!