

ISSUE
01

December
2012

UNIVERSITY OF
MINNESOTA
DULUTH

MASTER of ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH and SAFETY NEWSLETTER



2012 Northern Regional Safety Day Duluth, MN

On September 25, 2012 the members of the ASSE Northwest Student Chapter from the UMD Masters of Environmental Health and Safety program took part in the 2012 Northern Regional Safety Day at Spirit Mountain in Duluth, MN. The ASSE Northwest Student Chapter was proud to take part in this long standing event in the Duluth, MN area. This conference consisted of variety of presentations including a Minnesota OSHA update, Lessons Learned from Emergency Response, Managing Contractor Safety, and Effective Frontline Leader's Intellectual Toolkit. Overall, the members of the ASSE Northwest Student Chapter found this event informative and would like to thank the Minnesota Safety Council for extending an invitation to the student chapter.



Above: MEHS Students gathered outside of Safety Day in Proctor, MN for a group photo.

Editors' corner

Fall semester has come and gone! The semester was packed full of learning opportunities for the MEHS students. Students attended events near and far in order to gain a new perspective on Environmental Health and Safety.

The group was also able to connect with employees of the Environmental Health and Safety field, from a variety of industries, either by attending area seminars, touring facilities, or listening to class speakers. These opportunities gave the class an idea of the different industries that are in need of Environmental Health and Safety professionals and what challenges they might face while working in these industries.

It was the first semester for many students, and that meant making new friends and connections. The group worked well together, and I think I speak for the group when I say our time together thus far has been meaningful.

We do have to say a bittersweet farewell to one classmate. In December, Jonathan Molas will be graduating from the program and will be beginning his career. Jonathan also welcomed his second child, a baby boy, born in December. Congratulations all around to Jonathan! We'll miss you!

Sincerely,

Alanna Soukkala – alanna.soukkala@cliffsnr.com



ASSE Student Project – Halloween Safety

On October 28, 2012 the members of the ASSE Northwest Student Chapter from the UMD Masters of Environmental Health and Safety teamed up with the Boys and Girls Club of Duluth, MN to educate children about the potential hazards during Halloween. This was also held in conjunction with an annual Halloween party provided by the Boys and Girls Club to all its members with various activities provided for the children. Activities included a haunted maze, games, face painting, and trick-or-treating.

To educate the children about potential hazards during Halloween (more specifically trick-or-treating in congested areas with motor vehicle traffic) the students of the ASSE Northwest Chapter set up a booth where children and parents could stop by and receive reflective pumpkin stickers, Halloween buckets, and, of course, candy. In addition, an informative brochure was handed out to the children that explained the many hazards involved with trick-or-treating and the necessary steps that they and their parents can take to make Halloween a safe and enjoyable experience.

Overall, the group educated over 100 children on the potential hazards that exist during Halloween as well as the actions they can take to mitigate those hazards. The children, and most notably the parents, were very receptive to the organization and also mentioned what a good idea it was. With the relations that our group built with the Boys and Girls Club, and the enthusiasm the students showed during this project, the door is open to continue this service next year and hopefully for many years to come.



Above: Chris Kruger discussing how to have a safe Halloween.

Special Thanks

Thank you to our sponsors for Halloween Safety Project:

- Fastline Graphix, Hermantown, MN
- ME Elecmetal, Duluth, MN
- The UPS Store, Kenwood Shopping Center, Duluth, MN

Without your support, the Halloween Safety project would not have been a success!
THANK YOU!

Thank You

Scholarship Award Recipients

Gordon O. Voss Scholarships:

- Ryan Bogart
- Lee Wistrom
- Lana Steck



James Scott Soleim Scholarship:

- Ashley Fitzner

Cliffs Natural Resources Scholarship:

- Evan Engman

Upcoming Events

January 8, 2013:

- Construction Safety, The Builders Group

January 22, 2013:

- Spring Semester Begins

Future Leaders of Safety Conference

The members of the ASSE Northwest Student Chapter from the UMD Masters of Environmental Health and Safety were proud participants of ASSE's 2012 Future Safety Leaders Conference. The conference was held on November 8th, 2012 through November 9th, 2012 in Schaumburg, Illinois. In total the chapter was able to send nine members to Schaumburg, Illinois for this two day event. The organization found this event to be a great learning experience on professionalism in safety and preparing to become future safety professionals. The group would like to thank ASSE for extending their invitation to the University of Minnesota Duluth's ASSE Northwest Chapter in attending this event and we look forward to sending our future ASSE Northwest Student Chapter members next year.



Above: MEHS Students are all smiles for Chicago-Style pizza during a Future Leaders or Safety Conference free evening.



Noise Sampling Ordean Middle School, ISD #709

MEHS students gathered at Ordean Middle school in November to perform noise sampling of the wood shop. Samples were gathered during the session by using a sound level meter, and after the session by attaching a personal dosimeter to the instructor.

After the results were analyzed, students made suggestions on ISD #709's next steps. Students identified elements in the classroom that could be improved and provided recommendations on how to reduce noise levels. Students also priced their recommended solutions for ISD #709 and provided sample hearing conservation programs for the school to use.

The MEHS students enjoyed their time at Ordean Middle School and are looking forward to assisting ISD #709 with future safety projects.

Safety Tip : Winter Fire Safety

According to the NFPA, home fires are more common in winter than in any other season. This, of course, is due to increased heating and cooking. Home fires during winter also are caused by holiday decorations and winter storms that can interrupt electrical service, or cause people to use alternative heating sources.

To avoid home fires this season:

- Limit the use of extension cords, or overloading circuits with holiday lights
- Give portable or alternate heating sources their space, do not keep combustible items within three feet.
- Use fire screens, and make sure your chimney is cleaned annually.

Also, remember that working fire alarms can double your chances of survival in a fire emergency. Test your fire alarm monthly, and practice your escape routinely.



Alumni Spotlight

Name: Jeff Jarvela, UMD ASSE Student Section Liaison

Year of Graduation: 1997

Place of Employment: Cliffs Natural Resources



What are your responsibilities at Cliffs Natural Resources?

I am a Safety Program Manager for Cliffs Global Operations Services – Health and Safety. Basically what that boils down to is that I am safety resource or advisor to the whole company. I develop corporate safety standards and help the sites develop and implement their site programs accordingly. Earlier in 2012 I was given the responsibility the responsibility to identify, develop and implement all of the H&S program for a small mining exploration project in remote northern Ontario. This project has its own challenges beyond the fact that it's 300 miles north of Thunder Bay. This is a very small, remote site, with fairly limited resources, dealing multiple contractors throughout the year, all keeping in mind that it will grow to a full surface mining operation in the next 3-5 years. It been a challenge trying to develop the required programs without overburdening their limited personnel resources, but also leaving them prepared to grow as construction and mining activities begins to ramp up. I am also helping implement a corporate-wide program that will focus on understanding why workers perform at-risk actions, identifying and tracking targeted safe actions, and positive reinforcement to help build a stronger safety culture throughout Cliffs.

What was the hardest transition for you to make from the classroom to the industry?

The hardest transition was realizing that the classroom only gave me a small slice of a very big pie. The classroom tends to teach us how things should be developed and implemented in a fairly ideal environment. Then I went to work, where I realized there are a lot of things that are not ideal. This wasn't all bad though, I knew where I needed to go, it was just trying to figure out how to get there that was going to be the hard part. It's amazing what you learn along the way. Every hear about tribometry? Neither did I until a year ago, now I'm becoming our companies resident expert in it.

What challenges do you face daily?

Remember my comment about knowing where to go? I'm still on that journey. The mining industry has a lot of challenges, from dealing with a very enforcement-centered US regulatory agency, and learning the regulations of Canada and Australia, and figuring out how to apply it all to our corporate standards. Cliffs is a 160 year old company, but our corporate standards are only 6 years old, we have a lot of work ahead of us to make Cliffs one of the most progressive mining companies in Safety & Health.

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

Learning something new every single day. With coming in to a completely different industry, working in multiple countries and continents, there is never a dull moment. Working with some of the regulatory agencies can be extremely frustrating, but we just have to treat it as another challenge to overcome.

Do you have any advice for this year's graduates?

Take your safety & health degree as an excellent step in the learning process, but realize the vast majority of your education comes in the real world. When it comes to looking for jobs, step out of your comfort zone, move somewhere you have never been, do things you have never done, and work in industries you never expected to, the opportunities can be endless. Get your certifications. Have fun in your workplace, if you're not, find someplace better.

Current Student Spotlight

Name: Lee Wistrom, President, Northwest ASSE Student Section

Expected Graduation: May, 2013

Undergraduate Degree: Majored in Exercise Science, Minored in Health and Fitness



What interested you in the Masters of Environmental Health and Safety?

What interested me most about the program is the fact that upon our graduation we will be able to pursue careers in a variety of industries. Also, I see this occupation as very rewarding, especially considering our goal will be to send our employees home in the same condition as they arrive. If you want the opportunity to make a difference in workers' lives, I highly suggest this career path for you.

What class(es) have you enjoyed the most?

Construction Safety and Principles of Industrial Hygiene were my two favorites.

What industry would you like to start your health and safety career in?

I have been lucky enough to get an internship in the mining industry which is the same industry that I have always wanted to work in.

Do you have any advice for prospective or current students?

If you are a prospective student who is thinking about joining this program, I highly recommend it. Upon graduation from this program there is a good chance that you will find a great career within an industry of your choice. If you have any questions about the program feel free to contact me or any other current student in the program, we would be glad to answer your questions. For current students, I recommend taking advantage of all the networking opportunities with current students and those working in the field today. At some point in our career we will probably be reaching out to one another for some form of assistance. Lastly, take advantage of ASSE!

What will you miss the most about the program after graduation?

I will definitely miss the instructors who have been great during my time in the MEHS program. However, the thing I will miss the most is when class was over and you could say, 'I learned a lot today and I can't wait to use that in the field.'

Anything else you'd like to add?

Go Dogs!!!



Thanks to all the alumni that have shown their support throughout the fall 2012 semester!