

## **LCDR Katie L. Bante Wins Walter F. Snyder Environmental Health Award From NSF International and NEHA**

*The prestigious award is given annually in honor of NSF International's cofounder and first executive director Walter F. Snyder for outstanding contributions to the advancement of environmental health*



LCDR Katie L. Bante, MPH, REHS/RS  
Recipient of the 2019 Walter F. Snyder Award

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (June 19, 2019) – NSF International and the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) are pleased to announce that **LCDR Katie L. Bante, MPH, REHS/RS**, is the 2019 recipient of the distinguished **Walter F. Snyder Environmental Health Award**. LCDR Bante will receive the award on July 11 at the NEHA Annual Educational Conference in Nashville, Tennessee in recognition of her leadership and collaboration in spearheading public health initiatives.

The Snyder Award honors NSF International's cofounder and first executive director, Walter F. Snyder, who provided outstanding contributions to the advancement of environmental and public health.

"Not only is LCDR Bante a highly proficient public health professional, she excels at recognizing environmental health disparities and motivating stakeholders to apply innovative solutions," says CDR Jennifer Dobson, MPH, REHS, DAAS, Environmental Health Services Manager at Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation. "The impacts of her work are substantial and far reaching – from the tribal health system in remote Alaska to the Coast Guard aviation community." CDR Dobson worked with LCDR Bante in Alaska and nominated her for the award.

Working as an environmental health professional since 2008, LCDR Bante has taken leadership roles in multiple initiatives to recognize and improve environmental health disparities. She has provided direct expertise to diverse populations on a wide range of environmental health issues including drinking water, solid waste management, indoor air quality, pest management and vector control, infection control and occupational health and safety.

Serving as an Environmental Health Officer with the U.S. Coast Guard (CG), LCDR Bante was selected in 2017 to serve as project officer for a multi-year industrial hygiene project assessing hazards and exposure risks associated with aviation corrosion control operations. She collaborated and coordinated with teams of senior enlisted, U.S. Public Health Service and CG Officers to evaluate corrosion control work at CG air stations. LCDR Bante's efforts contributed to identifying and correcting 300 hazardous conditions, implementing safe work practices, mitigating exposure risks and improving workplace safety for over 800 CG members.

Prior to her CG role, LCDR Bante worked for the Indian Health Service in Alaska as an Environmental Health Specialist in Fairbanks and earlier, as an Environmental Health Consultant in Anchorage. During this time, she led the development of integrated pest management policy programs, which were the first of their kind, to address an increase in bed bug infestations across rural Alaska. She became certified as the only public health pest control pesticide applicator in Alaska at that time. In 2015, LCDR Bante collaborated with a partner tribal health organization to obtain U.S. EPA funding to develop a toolkit that provided practical information for homeowners to safely prevent and control bed bugs. Over 100 toolkits were distributed to 36 remote communities

throughout Alaska, and participant surveys showed the toolkit was effective. The project was a first to combine actual tools with public health outreach, and it became a model for other tribal bed bug programs around the nation. LCDR Bante and her colleagues received the Alaska Public Health Association's Community Service Award in 2018 for this work.

In an earlier project, LCDR Bante addressed concerns about the impact of contaminated lands in tribal communities. She obtained EPA funding totaling approximately \$500,000 over four years to develop a public health-focused contaminated sites reuse program. The program provided valuable consultation, assessment and technical assistance to tribal communities in identifying and documenting potential risks to human health and the environment. As a result, three tribal communities in Interior Alaska successfully obtained environmental assessment and clean-up services for properties that would have been impossible to fund and manage locally. Other tribal communities in Alaska and nationwide have adapted this program for their own unique site needs.

LCDR Bante is a member of NEHA and the Virginia Environmental Health Association (VEHA), and previously of the Alaska Environmental Health Association (AEHA). She received the 2016 NEHA Affiliate Certificate of Merit, and was awarded the 2012 AEHA Environmental Health Professional of the Year award.

LCDR Bante holds a master's degree in public health, specializing in disaster management, and a graduate certificate in industrial hygiene from Tulane University. She also earned a B.S. in environmental health and in health education and promotion from East Carolina University.

Snyder Award nominations are open to the public, and a juror panel of environmental health leaders selects the recipients. For more information about the Walter F. Snyder Award or to nominate a colleague for next year's award, visit [NSF International's website](#).

**About NSF International:** NSF International ([nsf.org](http://nsf.org)) is celebrating 75 years of protecting and improving human health. The global public health organization facilitates consensus standards development, and tests and certifies products for the food, water, health sciences and consumer products industries to minimize adverse health effects and protect the environment. Founded in 1944 at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, NSF International is a Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization Collaborating Center on Food Safety, Water Quality and Indoor Environment.

**About NEHA:** The National Environmental Health Association ([neha.org](http://neha.org)) is a professional organization with more than 5,000 members in the public and private sectors as well as in universities and uniformed services. It publishes the peer-reviewed *Journal of Environmental Health* providing a valuable resource for the complete spectrum of environmental health topics. NEHA's mission, "to advance the environmental health professional for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all" is fulfilled in the products and services offered by NEHA through training, education, networking, professional development and policy involvement. [www.neha.org](http://www.neha.org).

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