

Employer Spotlight: IQ Solutions

For more than 30 years, IQ Solutions has been a leader in health communication, using digital technology to create solutions that advance public health initiatives. As a woman- and minority-owned business founded by health educator Ileana Quintas, the company blends expertise with a foundation of health education principles to deliver science-based information to communities across the United States.



A Legacy Rooted in Health Education

In 1993, IQ Solutions opened its doors with a clear vision to build an organization focused on making science accessible to diverse audiences. Under Cuban-born Quintas' steady leadership, the company has grown from a one-person operation into a nationwide health communications powerhouse, employing more than 200 people.

Quintas' foresight in embracing digital tech and new, effective ways of addressing public health challenges from the outset, created a niche for IQ Solutions as a leader in digital health communication, even when such innovations were just emerging in the 1990s. Today, the company skillfully integrates health education principles with leading-edge technologies to address critical or developing public health challenges.

Advancing Public Health Through Partnerships

IQ Solutions collaborates with federal and community partners, including federal agencies like the NIH, CDC, and FDA, and often with national- and local-level partners, including community health workers, to support meaningful local implementation. These alliances enable the company to develop and execute public health campaigns that resonate with diverse populations.

"Our partnerships with organizations such as SOPHE and SHAPE exemplify the synergy between public health educators and our federal clients," said Lisa Falconer,

MPH, CHES®, VP of Health Communications. "For instance, we recently worked with SHAPE America to develop health education lesson plans aligned with national standards, showcasing how IQ Solutions bridges federal initiatives with community needs."

Julie Hentz, MPH, Director of Social Issue Marketing, highlighted IQ's reciprocal relationships with academic and professional organizations. "Our alliances with SOPHE and other education-driven entities strengthen our reach and reflect our aligned commitment to advancing public health."



The COVID-19 Initiative: A Transformative Impact

During the pandemic, IQ Solutions played a pivotal role in the federal COVID-19 response. Through the Combat COVID initiative, the company worked to deliver crucial health information to underserved communities. This involved forming regional teams across the United States,

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engaging community health organizations and faith-based groups, and hiring local leaders to support the development and dissemination of information on clinical trials, vaccines, and treatments.

“We leveraged community leaders to ensure messaging and resources were resonant and actionable,” Falconer said. “This work not only expanded our team but also reinforced the importance of localized, trusted communication in public health crises.”

Lead Consultant Liz Dueweke, MPH, CHES® joined IQ Solutions during this period, drawn by its emphasis on meaningful, health-focused work. “The opportunity to contribute to such impactful projects while exploring diverse health topics was a defining factor in my decision to join IQ Solutions,” she shared.

Championing Certification and Professional Growth

IQ Solutions is a staunch supporter of the CHES® and MCHES® credentials. Both Falconer and Dueweke are CHES®-certified,

and the organization actively encourages employees to pursue and maintain these certifications. Hentz emphasized the company’s recognition of CHES® credentials as a mark of professional excellence.



Hentz emphasized the company’s recognition of CHES® credentials as a mark of professional excellence. “Holding the CHES® certification reflects a deep understanding of health education principles, which aligns with our mission,” she explained. “We prioritize hiring certified professionals and encourage current staff to obtain the credential.”

Professional development is embedded in IQ Solutions’ culture. The company provides up to \$5,000 annually in tuition reimbursement and offers a \$2,000 bonus for employees who complete a graduate degree. Additionally, employees are encouraged to attend conferences and training programs, often fully funded by the company. For instance, employees like Dueweke have taken advantage of IQ Solutions’ support to pursue specialized certifications, such as a health literacy specialist certificate. The company also actively promotes participation in professional presentations and conferences, fostering thought leadership among staff and providing a platform to share their expertise.

Collaboration is Key

IQ Solutions’ commitment to employee growth also extends to hands-on training and collaboration opportunities. Hentz shared a compelling example of how the organization supported her work on the CDC Foundation and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health’s Data to Policy initiative. “This global effort focused on training policymakers in culturally respectful ways to identify and address top health conditions contributing to mortality and morbidity,” Hentz said.

Hentz traveled to Ghana to conduct focus groups and interviews with trainers, students, and health ministry officials. “We didn’t just deliver training; we evaluated whether it respected local learning styles and cultural contexts,” she said. This work culminated in adult training toolkits tailored to ensure cultural competence and effectiveness in diverse global settings. “It was rewarding to create toolkits that were not only effective but also deeply respectful of local traditions and learning preferences,” Hentz said. By emphasizing cultural competency, the company ensures that its work resonates with the communities it serves.

Creating a Family-Centric Workplace

Despite its size and remote work model, IQ Solutions fosters a familial atmosphere. Employees often describe the organization as a supportive, tight-knit community where individual contributions are celebrated. With a retention rate of 92 percent, IQ exemplifies how investing in employee satisfaction translates into organizational success. “We’re not just colleagues; we’re a family,” Hentz said. “Our CEO ensures we gather for company-wide events, even in a remote setting. It’s this sense of belonging that makes IQ Solutions unique.”

Looking Ahead

As IQ Solutions continues to expand its reach, the organization remains steadfast in its mission to improve health outcomes through education and communication. With a team of dedicated professionals and a commitment to innovation, IQ Solutions is poised to lead the way in data-driven solutions that improve quality of life. [Visit the IQ solutions website.](#)

Board of Commissioners Chair Report

Anna Armstrong, PhD, MPH, CPH, MCHES®



As the Chair of NCHEC's BOC, I am excited to share my reflections on NCHEC's participation as an exhibitor at the 2024 American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This event offered another remarkable opportunity for us to connect with public health professionals from around the nation (and beyond!) to showcase our commitment to professional development, connect with and gather invaluable insights from our credential-holders.

The energy at the APHA Annual Meeting was palpable. After years of virtual interactions, this full return to an in-person format brought a renewed sense of enthusiasm and connection. Our booth was a hub of activity, buzzing with conversations and exchanges of ideas, questions, and new commitments to the field of health education. It was heartening to see the dedication

and passion of our staff as they engaged with attendees, providing information about our CHES® and MCHES® credentials and the benefits of certification.

As Chair, it gave me great pride to meet credential-holders from such diverse representation from all practice settings. CHES® and MCHES® are literally in every corner of the country and in every type of industry you can imagine...local, state and federal government (including the United States Public Health Service), military, universities, healthcare and more!

One of the highlights of the event was the opportunity to hear directly from you. Your stories of professional growth and the impact of certification on so many careers were truly inspiring. For me, these interactions served to underscore the importance of our mission to promote continued learning and professional development in the field of health education and share the importance of hiring CHES® and MCHES® as the gold standard.

The event also sparked several strategic and creative ideas for NCHEC. Engaging with a diverse group of public health professionals allowed us to gather feedback and insights that will inform our future initiatives. The emphasis on the great scope of the CHES® and MCHES® in the workforce reinforced our commitment to promoting the benefits of hiring our credential holders.

Our participation in the 2024 APHA Annual Meeting was a resounding success. The positive energy, meaningful interactions, and valuable feedback we received will undoubtedly shape our efforts moving forward. I am excited about the future of NCHEC and the continued growth and development of our community.

Conferences 2025 | CE credits available | NCHEC exhibiting

Organization	Website	Date	Location
SOPHE Annual Conference	www.sophe.org	April 16 - 18, 2025	Long Beach, CA
SOPHE Advocacy Summit	www.sophe.org	TBD October 2025	Washington, D.C.
American Public Health Association	www.apha.org	November 2 - 5, 2025	Washington, D.C.

Executive Director's Report

Charting a Future Course for Advancing the Value of Our Credentials

Melissa Opp, MPH, MCHES®, ICE-CCP



As we step into 2025, I want to take a moment to celebrate the journey we've shared and to look ahead to an exciting future. The new year brings not only fresh opportunities but also the launch of NCHEC's new 5-Year Strategic Plan, which will guide us as we work together to enhance the value and impact of the CHES® and MCHES® credentials.

The NCHEC Board of Commissioners has created this plan to reinforce our dedication to advancing the health education profession and maintaining the integrity of your credentials as a mark of excellence.

After thoughtful planning and collaboration, we've identified four strategic opportunities that will shape NCHEC's work from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2029.

- **Partnerships:** We will identify and build new strategic partnerships that strengthen our mission while enhancing existing relationships. Collaboration remains key to amplifying our reach and impact.
- **Marketing:** New and dynamic marketing initiatives will enhance the visibility of CHES® and MCHES® professionals and promote the value you bring to the workforce and communities you serve.
- **Recognition:** We will highlight the critical work you do through ongoing recognition efforts, showcasing your contributions and leadership in many areas of health education practice.
- **Targeted Research Collaborations:** NCHEC will encourage and support research collaborations that advance the health education profession and demonstrate the essential role of credentialed specialists.

The development of these new initiatives is already underway, with specific tasks assigned to NCHEC's leadership, Division Boards, Marketing Committee, and staff. Together, we will foster new partnerships, amplify the visibility of your work, and celebrate the achievements of health education specialists like you.

In the coming months, we look forward to sharing updates and success stories as we advance these initiatives. Whatever your role, your dedication to improving health outcomes inspires us every day. You are the heart of our mission. On behalf of NCHEC, I thank you for your continued commitment to excellence. Here's to a year of growth, recognition, and collaboration as we embrace the opportunities ahead.



NCHEC Online
Certified Community

Hot Topics
Resources
Live Events



VISIT THE NCHEC ONLINE COMMUNITY
www.nchech.org

2024 Infographic Contest Winners

NCHEC's annual infographic contest gives our CHES®/MCHES® (and aspiring CHES®) an opportunity to display their creative talents. NCHEC's Marketing Committee, which both sponsors and judges the annual contest, has announced the winners of the 2024 Infographic Contest. Entries in two categories; certified and non-certified (student), were judged based on whether the design was compelling and sharable, clearly communicated an idea or concept, cited accurate resources, and whether the infographic would be of value to those who are certified, or individuals considering certification in the future. [View all the winners here.](#)

Certified Category (active CHES®/MCHES®)

- **Alicia Miller - 1st Place Winner** | Professional Skillset of a Certified Health Education Specialist
- **Sophia Garbarino - 2nd Place Winner** | Six Tips to Help Successfully Maintain Your CHES®/MCHES® Certification
- **Hillary Bryan - Honorable Mention** | Train Conductor vs. CHES®/MCHES®

Student Category (health education and health promotion students)

- **Jordan Ford - 1st Place Winner** | Get Certified, Get Connected
- **Nathalia Llanos - 2nd Place Winner** | 5 Benefits of Becoming CHES® or MCHES® Certified



PROFESSIONAL SKILLSET OF A CERTIFIED HEALTH EDUCATION SPECIALIST (CHES®)

01. Assessment

CHES® identify, obtain, and analyze data, discovering priority populations, their health status, and influential factors to develop recommendations and reports.

CHES® work with the priority population to develop goals, choose interventions, and design plans and materials for implementation and evaluation.

02. Planning

CHES® coordinate and deliver health interventions, and monitor implementation as planned.

03. Implementation

CHES® develop a process, impact, and outcome evaluation plan in alignment with intervention goals and objectives.

04. Evaluation

CHES® design research studies and properly manage data. They also interpret and use data findings to develop interventions.

05. Research

CHES® recognize issues needing change and engage with others to address the issue, advocate for change, and evaluate efforts.

06. Advocacy

CHES® uncover factors that affect communication, establish objectives, develop messages, select methods to deliver messages, and evaluate message impact.

07. Communication

CHES® develop, maintain, and coordinate relationships with partners and stakeholders, engage in strategic planning, and prepare others to provide health education and promotion.

08. Leadership

CHES® manage human, financial, and material resources throughout the health education and promotion process.

09. Management

CHES® act as a health education and promotion authority, engage in professional development, and promote the profession to others.

10. Professionalism

Adapted from NCHEC Areas of Responsibility, Competencies, and Sub-Competencies for Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis II (2020)



GET CERTIFIED, GET CONNECTED!

CHES® AND MCHES® CERTIFICATION IS MORE THAN A CREDENTIAL - IT'S A PATHWAY TO COMMUNITY, COLLABORATION AND IMPACT.

NETWORKING

As a certified professional, you'll gain access to conferences, webinars, and online groups, where you can connect with peers and experts from around the world.

COLLABORATION

You will collaborate with CHES® and MCHES® professionals across diverse sectors, sharing best practices and resources to address public health challenges together.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

With certification, you'll play a vital role in advocating for public health policies and leading initiatives that promote health education, often improving outcomes in underserved communities.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Certification provides you with access to ongoing professional development, helping you stay updated on health trends and grow within a supportive community.

CREDIBILITY

By earning your CHES® or MCHES® certification, you demonstrate your commitment and competence in the field, enhancing your professional credibility and opening doors to new career opportunities.

GET CERTIFIED, JOIN A COMMUNITY OF CHANGEMAKERS, AND MAKE AN IMPACT TOGETHER. LEARN MORE ABOUT CHES® AND MCHES® CERTIFICATION TODAY!

Credentialing excellence in health education. National Commission for Health Education Credentialing. (2024, September 30). <https://www.nchech.org/>



MIMI BYELICK

NCHEC CONTINUING
EDUCATION
COORDINATOR



Continuing Education Corner:

with Mimi Byelick, NCHEC Continuing Education Coordinator

Q: I'm an MCHES®, but I'm still confused about what advanced-level credits are and how to earn them. Can you explain?

A: Absolutely! Advanced-level credits are unique to the MCHES® credential. Of the 75 Continuing Education Contact Hours (CECH) required for MCHES® recertification, 30 must be related to **advanced-level Sub-competencies** within the Eight Areas of Responsibility. These credits highlight your expertise and leadership in health education.

The good news is that earning these credits can often align with activities you're already doing! Here are five examples to get you started. Remember to submit using the Category II claim form in your **online portal**!

- **Developing a Health Education Curriculum:** Create a course or program to earn 5 advanced Category II CECH with supporting documentation.
- **Presenting Research at a Conference:** Share your findings to earn 3 advanced Category II CECH per presentation with proof of delivery.
- **Writing a Grant Proposal:** Submit a funding proposal to earn 4 advanced Category II CECH with proof of submission.
- **Facilitating a Stakeholder Workgroup:** Lead a collaborative group to earn 2 advanced Category II CECH annually with documentation of your role.
- **Developing a Logic Model for Evaluation:** Create a logic model for a program to earn 3 advanced Category II CECH with a copy of the completed model.

These activities, and many others, provide practical ways to earn advanced-level CECH while showcasing your professional contributions. For more ideas, **visit this recent article** or **log into your account** to submit activities through the Category II Claim Form.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? REACH OUT TO NCHEC FOR MORE GUIDANCE—WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

O*NET Seeks CHES® and MCHES® Participation in New Study

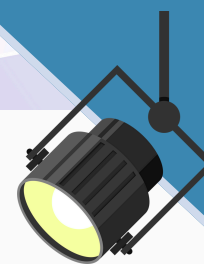
The O*NET Data Collection Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, is seeking the input of expert Health Education Specialists.

Your participation in this critical initiative ensures that **the roles and responsibilities of Certified Health Education Specialists are accurately represented in the O*NET database**. This contributes to increased public understanding of the profession and highlights the value and complexity of your work in promoting health and well-being across diverse settings.

Experts who are selected and agree to participate will **receive a \$40 VISA gift code** and a certificate of appreciation from the U.S. Department of Labor.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO PARTICIPATE, VISIT THE [NCHEC WEBSITE HERE](#).



Provider Spotlight: CDC Continuing Education Accreditation Team

This quarter, we are pleased to highlight the outstanding work of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Continuing Education Accreditation Team in the Division of Workforce Development. This team provides hundreds of free educational opportunities for CHES® and MCHES® credential holders as part of their continuing education work.

We recently had the chance to interview Ann Wells, a Nurse Educator on the Continuing Education Accreditation Team, who shared insights into the team's mission, programs, and commitment to support health education specialists.



The CDC's Role in Health Education

Reflecting on CDC's historical commitment to health education, Ann notes, "In the 1940s, CDC started as the Communicable Disease Center, focused on controlling malaria and other tropical diseases. Three major interventions were used to stop the spread of malaria: providing anti-malarial drugs, killing mosquitos, and educating people about disease control."

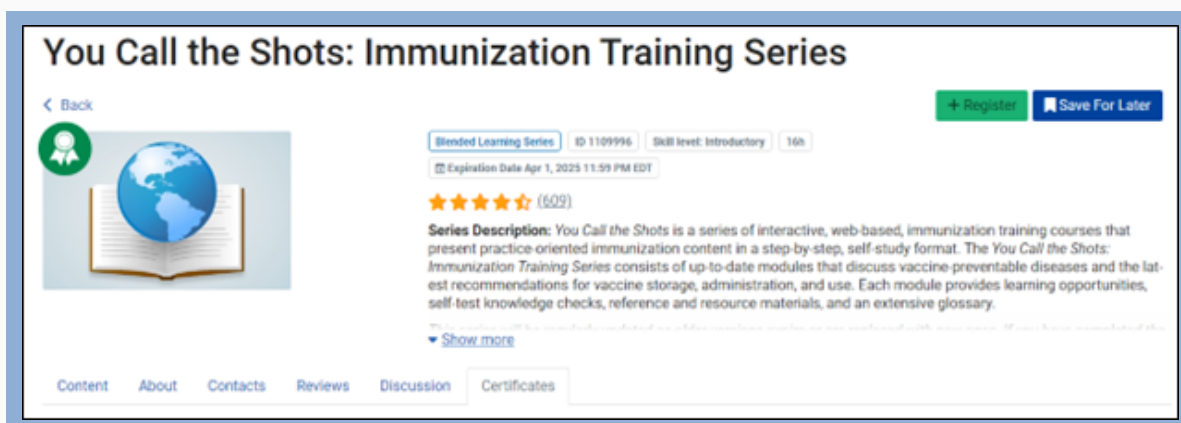
As the organization grew, so did its dedication to education. "Dr. David Sencer, CDC's longest-serving director, helped expand CDC's focus to include broader topics like tobacco control, family planning, and health education," she shares. This legacy continues today, with the CDC providing CHES® credits since 2001 and MCHES® credits since 2019.

A Commitment to Continuing Education

As part of the Division of Workforce Development, Ann's team is driven by a mission to prepare the health workforce for the 21st century. "Health education specialists are an important part of the workforce," she says. "They have a unique blend of skills—health communication, program planning, and addressing social determinants of health—that are crucial for successful public health programs. We want to ensure they can maintain their CHES® and MCHES® certifications and receive the most current, quality education on public health topics."

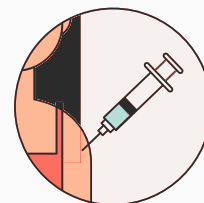
Wide-Ranging Programs and Topics

CDC's continuing education programs span numerous topics. "Our courses cover almost every topic CDC addresses," Ann explains, citing areas like immunizations, disease updates, workplace violence prevention, antibiotic stewardship, and diversity training.



Among the CDC's most popular courses are:

- Immunization: *You Call the Shots-Module 10-Storage and Handling*
- Immunization: *You Call the Shots-Module 16-Vaccines for Children Program*
- Immunization: *You Call the Shots-Module 18-Vaccine Administration*



Provider Spotlight cont.

These courses, available on TRAIN, provide essential knowledge for public health professionals and are highly regarded for their practical application.

Ensuring Relevance and Accuracy

When it comes to keeping content current, Ann emphasizes the rigorous standards in place. “Our accreditation process is part of the educational development process,” she says. The team relies on [CDC's Quality Training Standards](#) to ensure that each activity is relevant and accurate.

“We require a planning committee for each activity, made up of people who represent the audience and professions we’re trying to reach. Subject matter experts and CHES®-certified reviewers are also part of the planning and review process,” she adds. To guarantee ongoing accuracy, accredited courses must be reviewed every two years and undergo updates every four years to maintain their certification.

Diverse Delivery Methods

CDC has embraced innovative methods to enhance learner engagement. “When COVID-19 began, we moved to a largely digital environment, which was challenging but rewarding,” Ann recalls. “Our design team introduced interactive elements like small group discussions and live chats, and even now that in-person learning is back, we continue using these techniques. Engagement is key for retention.” The team also shares best practices for training development on their [website](#), providing additional resources to other educators.

Response to Feedback

Participant feedback is a cornerstone of CDC’s program improvement. “We require pilot testing for our enduring educational activities,” says Ann. “Feedback from these tests is essential, and once the program goes live, we also gather evaluation data and post-test results. These are shared with the course developers to refine future activities.” By aligning with CDC’s Quality Training Standards, the team ensures their activities meet the highest educational standards.

Impact is carefully measured through post-tests and follow-up evaluations. “Learners need to pass a post-test at 70% or higher to earn their continuing education credits, and everyone gets two attempts,” Ann explains. Additionally, learners receive a follow-up survey three weeks after completing a course to assess how they’ve applied the new knowledge in their work. “We want to know if they’re able to incorporate what they learned,” she says, underscoring the team’s focus on meaningful, applicable education.

Tackling Emerging Issues

“New public health issues continue to emerge, and our workforce needs to stay up to date,” Ann emphasizes. “Health education specialists bring expertise in program planning, community needs assessment, and more. Continuing education is essential for equipping them to tackle public health challenges.”

CDC’s continuing education types are expanding, with exciting plans on the horizon. “We recently began offering continuing education for social workers, and in 2025, we hope to provide maintenance of certification (MOC) for American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) certified physicians,” Ann reveals. With over 850 courses offered in 2023, the CDC’s programs continue to attract a growing number of learners.

For more information on CDC educational activities, [visit the TRAIN website](#) and explore the many resources to help you advance your career in health education and promotion.





Helen P. Cleary Scholarship Recipients for Students Seeking the CHES® Credential in April 2025

We're thrilled to announce the three outstanding recipients of the Helen P. Cleary Scholarship for the upcoming April 2025 CHES® examination! This prestigious award, established in 2019, helps full-time undergraduate and graduate students cover their CHES® exam fees, supporting their journey to becoming certified health education specialists. The scholarship isn't just about financial support. It's also a celebration of students who show a deep commitment to health education and promotion and a clear passion for making an impact in their communities. Administered by the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Awards Committee and sponsored by NCHEC, this scholarship is offered twice a year, giving aspiring health educators educators a boost toward achieving their professional dreams.



Karine David
Emory University, Rollins School of
Public Health



Yunjin Kim
Liberty University



Emily Brown
Rutgers School of Public Health



Karine David is a second-year Master of Public Health (MPH) student studying Behavioral, Social, and Health Education Sciences at Emory University Rollins School of Public Health. She received a Bachelor of Science in Biology Pre-Medicine from Florida A&M University. Says David, "I have a passion for sexual and women's health and plan to use my knowledge in research, community outreach and health education to empower young and adult women from underserved communities."

Yunjin Kim is an international student from Korea pursuing a B.S. in Public Health with a concentration in Health Promotion at Liberty University. Growing up in Indonesia, a developing country, Kim witnessed the harsh struggles many impoverished children face in accessing education and opportunities. "These experiences inspired my deep commitment to develop initiatives that empower underprivileged children to pursue their dreams and unlock their full potential," said Kim.

Emily Brown is a student at the Rutgers School of Public Health with a concentration in Urban Public Health and Health Policy. "I strongly believe that access to healthy social determinants—like education, healthcare, safe living conditions, and equal opportunities—should be recognized as a fundamental human right," says Brown, "and I am confident that obtaining the CHES® credential will enhance my ability to promote, educate, and advocate for health and social justice, ultimately advancing my career in public health." In addition to her studies, Brown serves as a wellness ambassador for the Rutgers School of Public Health and works part-time at the Rutgers Health Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance office.

The next application period for the Helen P. Cleary Scholarship will run from April 14-18, 2025, for the October 2025 CHES® examination. For more information about the Helen P. Cleary Scholarship, please visit www.nchec.org/scholarships, or www.sophe.org.

NCHEC WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS IN 2025

We're excited to introduce the dedicated professionals stepping into leadership roles on the NCHEC Board in January 2025. These incredible individuals, chosen by you—our CHES® and MCHES® credential holders—bring a wealth of expertise, passion, and fresh perspectives to help guide NCHEC's mission. Join us in celebrating and welcoming these outstanding leaders.

WELCOME

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: HEIDI E. AUSTIN, EDD, EDS, MS, BS, MCHES®, CFLE

Heidi E. Austin brings extensive experience and a passion for health education to her role on the NCHEC Board of Commissioners. As the Project AWARE Director for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, she advocates for mental health as a health disparity and highlights the connection between health and educational equity.

Certified as a CHES® in 2005 and MCHES® in 2011, Heidi has contributed across public education, public health, university-level health education, and the early childhood non-profit sector. She was one of 15 experts chosen for the HESPA III 2024 panel, helping shape competencies for health education professionals. Previously, as Director of Innovative Approaches with the NC Division of Public Health, Heidi advanced health equity for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN), fostering community empowerment and improving service delivery. Her dedication to health education and advocacy makes her an invaluable member of the NCHEC BOC.



DIVISION BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND PRACTICE: DEREK CEGELKA, PHD, MPH, CHES®

Derek is an assistant professor at Hawaii Pacific University and brings over 16 years of expertise as a CHES® to his new role on the NCHEC Division Board for Professional Preparation and Practice. With experience across institutions ranging from small to large, Derek is passionate about advancing public health education and ensuring students are well-prepared for impactful careers.

Derek has actively contributed to the field by participating in the Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis (HESPA & HESPA II) and leveraging his program's reaccreditation process with CEPH to deepen his understanding of credentialing. His comprehensive approach to education and professional development makes him a valuable advocate for credentialing and professional practice in health education.



DIVISION BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND PRACTICE: TINA MARIE DEVLIN, MPH, MCHES®

Tina Marie Devlin is a dynamic and highly organized health education specialist with over 20 years of experience in health and wellness program design, implementation, and management. Currently serving in the Department of Health Education and Promotion at East Carolina University as a Teaching Instructor, Tina specializes in creating culturally appropriate programs and utilizing motivational interviewing techniques to address the health needs of diverse populations.

In addition to her academic role, Tina works as an independent contractor with McGraw Hill and Constituent Services Worldwide, where she leverages her expertise in health education and promotion to contribute to diverse initiatives. Her proficiency in strategic wellness planning and evidence-based health education strategies is complemented by over five years of experience teaching undergraduate hmoses@hnp.ufl.edu public health courses. Tina holds an MPH in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior from the University of South Carolina, earned in 2007.



DIVISION BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF HEALTH EDUCATION SPECIALISTS: JULIA VARNES, PHD, MPH, MCHES®

Julia Varnes is the Program Director for the Master of Public Health program and a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Florida. With nearly 20 years of experience spanning nonprofits, college health promotion, and academia, she oversees UF's MPH program, ensuring alignment with accreditation standards and leading curriculum that prepares the future public health workforce.

A lifelong learner, Julia specializes in health promotion planning and evaluation and developing and evaluating examinations. She has served on NCHEC's DBCHES for five years, including as vice coordinator. She has also held leadership roles in SOPHE, ACHA, and NCHEC. Passionate about both teaching and practice, Julia strives to connect the two in the classroom through collaborative community projects to provide meaningful experiences to students, exemplifying her commitment to professional standards and innovation in public health education.



NCHEC WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS IN 2025 CONT.

WELCOME

DIVISION BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: CHIMENE CASTOR, PHD, RDN, CHES®, FAND

Chimene Casto is an Associate Professor at Howard University. She brings significant health education and professional development expertise to her NCHEC Division Board for Professional Development role. With eight years of experience on the Maryland Board of Dietetic Practice, where she held the positions of president and vice president, among other roles, Dr. Castor has been instrumental in ensuring public and professional safety by approving high-quality continuing education programs and upholding standards for licensed dietitian nutritionists.

Dr. Castor continues to provide essential health education and nutrition training at the university, preparing students for meaningful careers in community health. She has successfully organized the Nutritional Sciences Disparities Conferences, offering continuing education units (CEUs) and continuing medical education (CMEs) on relevant topics such as dementia and cognitive aging. As Co-Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, she has developed evidence-based statements that address the impact of dietetics on diverse communities. Her commitment to equity and professional development will undoubtedly enhance NCHEC initiatives.



DIVISION BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: LEAH ROMAN, MPH, MCHES®

Leah Roman is the Owner and Principal Consultant of Roman Public Health Consulting LLC, where she helps public health organizations design effective e-learning solutions. She has nearly two decades of experience as a CHES®/MCHES® professional, providing training and technical assistance, health education, and project management. Leah has a BA in Psychology (University of San Diego), a Master of Public Health degree (Boston University), and a certificate in E-learning Instructional Design (University of Washington).

Leah brings a multifaceted perspective as both a learner and a continuing education course designer across nonprofit, academic, and consulting settings. In addition to her design work, Leah serves as a subject matter expert, helping clients enhance their online courses to align with CHES®/MCHES® competencies and responsibilities. Her commitment to accessibility and quality improvement in continuing education makes her an invaluable addition to the NCHEC DBPD.



DIVISION BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF HEALTH EDUCATION SPECIALISTS: SARAH JACOB, MBA, MPH, MD, MCHES®

Sarah Jacob is the Director of Health Education at the Bloomfield Department of Health (BDH) in New Jersey, where she leads community health initiatives, professional development, and the current Community Health Assessment and CHIP development. Since 2023, she has revamped the department's newsletters, introduced new programs, and launched quarterly webinars offering continuing education for staff and public health practitioners.

As Bloomfield's Public Health Accreditation Coordinator, Sarah co-led the PHAB reaccreditation process for BDH, showcasing her expertise in public health systems evaluation and improvement. In May 2023, BDH became the first to secure PHAB reaccreditation in the state of New Jersey. Sarah also teaches as an adjunct instructor at Montclair State University, ensuring quality learning through inclusive evaluation and responsive course design. Sarah's leadership and commitment to advancing public health education make her a valuable asset to NCHEC.



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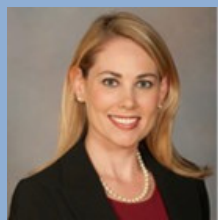
Leadership is the capacity to change vision into reality.

~Warren Bennis

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Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis (HESPA) III: Update

Submitted by Beth H. Chaney, Ph.D., MCHES®, Steering Committee Chair



The HESPA III project is well underway to validate the contemporary framework of practice for the health education and promotion field. The HESPA III Steering Committee is currently working on Phase 3 of implementation of the national practice analysis. In this phase, the HESPA III survey was launched in August 2024 and closed in November 2024. The survey was developed through a systematic process, including using qualitative data collected from our HESPA III panelists, and will provide valuable data on the Areas of Responsibility, Competencies and Sub-competencies for health education and promotion practice. Specifically, the results of the survey will inform the revisions to our practice framework and validate knowledge statements, within various topical areas, for practice in the field.

The Steering Committee would like to thank all health education specialists who took the HESPA III survey. Your input is valued and will be used in final data analyses. Moreover, the CHES® and MCHES® who completed the survey will receive two (2) Category 1 Continuing Education Contact Hours (CECHs), awarded by our HESPA III partner, the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). Thank you SOPHE! This is a field-wide project, and our partners have been vital to the success of each Phase.

Additionally, I would like to thank the HESPA III Steering Committee, Antonio Gardner (Co-Chair), Cherylee Sherry, Shontelle Dixon, Bill Datema, Melissa Opp, and Misozi Houston, and partners from Credentialing Examination Consulting, Inc., for all the work conducted, up to this point, and for all upcoming work.



Tentatively, the data analyses and final report will be completed in February 2025. Following this report, the Steering Committee will conduct a crosswalk of the HESPA II study results to the new HESPA III results. **The newly revised framework book will be unveiled in 2026, with the CHES® and MCHES® examination revisions to take place in 2027.**

More information on the HESPA III project can be found on the NCHEC website. We look forward to advancing the health education profession and appreciate all the help provided by our HESPA III survey participants!

CHES® High Scorer: October 2024

Lily Benig, MPH, CHES®



Lily Benig earned her undergraduate degree in Bioengineering with a minor in Communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and her MPH in Community Health Sciences with a Social Epidemiology certificate at Tulane University's Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. After brief stints in health IT, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and community COVID response, she has applied those experiences and expanded them at Global Liver Institute, a patient advocacy nonprofit founded in the belief that liver health must take its proper place on the global public health agenda. Working first on the communications team and now as Associate Director of Science & Public Health, she supports educational programs and advocacy training for a global community of advocates interested in liver health. Her professional focus is to improve health equity by making healthy choices the easiest choices through policy and societal change. In her free time, Lily loves to read both nonfiction and fiction (especially cozy mysteries), try new recipes, and spend time with loved ones exploring nature, at home and abroad.



Why CHES®?

Throughout the CHES® process, I have discovered structure and recognition for my natural curiosity. As a member of an interdisciplinary patient advocacy team, I have been able to add to my toolbox for impact while creating clear evidence of my professional growth.



NCHEC Ambassador Program Update:

Tilicia Mayo-Gamble, PhD, MPH, CHES® & Misozi Houston, MPH, MCHES®

AMBASSADOR TOWN HALL

SEPT
18 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET



Tina Marie Devlin
Teaching Instructor



Joy DeLeon
Instructional Assistant
Professor



Amanda Lynch Oney
Associate Professor,
Educator



Charis Davidson
Assistant Professor

NCHEC's Division Board for Professional Preparation and Practice (DBPPP) wishes to thank all Ambassadors who served during the 2024 calendar year. This year, DBPPP offered an Ambassador townhall as part of our continuing efforts to grow the NCHEC Ambassador Program and provide Ambassadors with necessary resources needed to support students. The townhall included an ambassador program overview, panel discussion, and a discussion of student engagement activities. To date, NCHEC has 170 Ambassadors at major universities across the U.S. Since its inception, this program has served as an awareness campaign for the value that the CHES® credential can provide students as professional Health Education Specialists demonstrating an understanding of the core Competencies and Responsibilities necessary for successful practice.

For ideas about engaging health education students at your institution, please view townhall recording on the NCHEC YouTube channel:

[Ambassador Webinar Recording](#)

On behalf of the NCHEC leadership and the DBPPP, we express our gratitude to the Ambassador Program participants for their service. Our division board applauds your efforts, as together we serve our students by providing sound guidance on career choices and professional preparation strategies.

Did you know that serving as a NCHEC Ambassador is not limited only to professionals in academia? NCHEC offers opportunities for practitioners who serve as preceptors for interns to serve as NCHEC Ambassadors. If you or a colleague would be a good match for this program, please visit our website or submit an online application at www.nchech.org/ambassador.

Outgoing Leadership: Thank You For Serving the NCHEC Organization and Credential-holders!



For Terms Ending in 2024:

We would like to express our appreciation for those who have completed terms of service in 2024:

- Beth Chaney (BOC)
- Cherylee Sherry (BOC)
- Tilicia Mayo-Gamble (BOC)
- Lynn Willis (BOC and DBPD)
- Chesley Cheatham (DBPD)
- Carolyn Rodgers (DBPPP)
- David Brown (DBCHES)
- Julia Varnes (DBCHES, reelected)
- Theresa Blanco (DBCHES)



A sincere thank you to all for your hard work and dedication to NCHEC and its governing boards. Our organization's success is a direct result of the many volunteer hours given by such outstanding individuals.

NCHEC Welcomes New CHES®: October 2024



The following is a list of those who earned the distinct title of Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES®) in the October 2024 examination. Those who opted not to be published are excluded from the list.

Michelin Aboukasm	Alexandria Busch	Juana Escobedo Bermudez	Bridget Holm	Michelle McKee
Sarah Khaled Aburaisi	Kevin Bush	Andrew Evans	Amelia Horn	Crystal Mcmillian
Nana Addae	Diana Caldera Castaneda	Anne Farrell	Keeley Horning	Lana McNaughtan
Damion Addison	Daniela Campos	Kameron Ferguson	Alena Horton	Aliyah McRae
Tabitha Addy	Hannah Carlson	Salva Firdaus	Hiedia Hozan	Debra Meier
Ifeoluwa Adesoye	Nyasha Carmichael	Elizabeth Freitas	Wendy Hughes	Charlotte Meller
Marlie Adrien	Mary Carmody	JaKaiya Frisby	Nisha Humayun	Lisa Merguie
Sadaf Aftab	Tabitha Carter	Olivia Frolichstein	Lauren Hunt-VanderPloeg	Eric Metcalf
Isabel Aguilera	Jan Catindig	Staci Fuller	Ngoc Huynh	Stefanie Mignone
Logan Ahearn	Elaika Janin Celemen	Aminata Gadjji	Zurisadai Inzunza	Isabella Milam
Onosiokeme Aleogena	Alane Celeste-Villalvir	Alexandra Gago	Tamara Irizarry-Acevedo	Kristina Miljkovic
Chelise Alford	Allison Cerco	Breyonna Gaines-Barrett	Kevin Jacobs	Haelee Miller
Franki Algarin	Kristin Champagne	Jordyn Galyan	Sheikh Jahan	Tycoma Miller
Fatimah Alramadhan	Elaine Chan	Sophia Garbarino	Brittany James	Kayla Minor
Bianca Alvarez	Gelila Chanie	Silvia Garcia	Alexandra Jean-Philippe	Daniela Mitchem
Briana Ampadu	Christelle Charles	Blanca Garcia-Silva	Alexis Johnson	Mariana Modave
Tazmara Anderson	Mileiza Charriez Cordero	Samantha Giron Medina	Whitney Johnson	Madeleine Moe
Alison Andrus	Jesus Chavez	Emely Giron Perdomo	Bobbi Jones	Isabella Moe
Shaylee Angell	Brandy Chisenhall	Rose Glaser	Kadija Jones	Shehnaaz Mohamed
Briana Angstman	Erin Chocklett	Mandessa Glasgow	Shamarra Jones	Nitisha Mohan
Alexandra Aquino	Elle Chumlongluk	Catherine Glennon	Euclid Joseph	Cassandra Mohawk
Lynessa Armstrong	Alison Clayshulte	Kelli Gomez	Laura Kallas	Meghan Molloy
Amy Arnold	Madison Collard	Alicia Gomez-West	Amelia Kauwelo	Crystal Montgomery
Danielle Aromashodu	Michelle Cook	Brianda Gonzalez	Seiki Kawahara	Alejandra Moreno Arreola
Alexa Arteaga	Isabel Cordova	Sydney Goodman	Amy Kirkman	Maria Moreno Leon
Miranda Ashmen	Adriana Cowell	Karly Gore	Nigel Kissoon	Malisha Moses
Valentina Asiedu	Emma Crall	Schkara Green	Michelle Klear	Donna Mullins
Clement Avoka	Jessika Crittenden	Candace Green	Vivien-Jade Kluis	Bethany Munshi
Rema Awethe	Tess Crubaugh	Sachara Green	Mia Koerner	Rasheeda Murphy
Karen Ayala	April Cruda	Arianne Grevesen	Tamara Krafft	Christine Mustac
Kaitlin Bachmeyer	Ashley Cruz	Taylor Griffin-Stevanson	Berenice Labra	Lanika Mutsach
Isatou Bah Madison	Joan D'Ambrosia	Clay Guinn	Joan Lamayo-Buse	Noel Chandan Nallipogu
Reshika Balayan	Lyndsey Dannenberg	Nattaley Gyger	Julia Landivar Donato	Sebastian Nauta
Jerriann Baltar	Alyson Davis	Leticia Haacke	Robyn Lane	Michael Navarrete Jr
Sophie Banspach	Zachary Deaton	Ian Hafley	Remi Larson	Lezinah Ncube
Caroline Barnes	Karla DeBlasie	Ella Hair	Tempestt Latham	Elizabeth Nelson
Savannah Barrios	Jennifer Derenoncourt	Santania Hairston	Lisa Leighton	Nelissa Nestor-John
Julia Baumohl	Claire Dever	Paige Hammond	Justin Lewis	Mimi Ngo
Karen Beal	Michaela DiDonna	Marissa Hardin	Vivica Lewis	Ryan Nguyen
Sara Beaudry	Regina Dixon	Hiba Hariri	Alysha Lieber	Olivia Nichols
Alexandrea Behler	Rachael Doe	McKenzie Harpe	Madison Litterell	Jenny Niefenfuhr
Anna Bellew	Kristin Doty	DAnniqua Harris	Emily Litz	Sabrina Niederhauser
Lily Benig	Erin Dresser	Scott Hauert	Jacqueline Lopez	Amanda Nielson
Rebecca Bennett	Andres Duenas	Jessica Heffner	Hailey Lord	Paige Noble
Kourtney Bennion	Chelle Dunston	Kaveen Henderson	Nina Love-Knox	Courtney Nowland
Elena Bernabe	Trinity Durborow	Emily Henry	Meghan Lucido	Brittany Nwoko
Surinder Bhinder	Samuel Durham	Ricardo Hernandez Arango	Brogan Madden	Alexis Odom
Annalise Bickley	Jewell Dusuau	Stephanie Herrera	Nemanja Maksimovic	Suman Ojha
Kristina Bignoli	Simran Dutta	Lauren Herrera Caceros	Lora Maloof-Miller	Naomie Olivos
Michael Blampye	Emily Dutton	Makenzie Hettrick	Nikita Maness	Tobi Oloyede
Sarah Bombino	Cecilia Edwards	Deshonell Higgins	Elizabeth Marshall	Savannah Olsson
Sophia Brand	Philip Ehuren	Shannon Hill	Meredith Mase	Jada Orahood
Adrianna Brown	Kalee Eichelberger	Shelley Hill	Spring Mason-Stewart	Emely Orellana
Jennifer Brown	Mary Elendu	Jessica Hiltebrand	Victoria Mastrianni	Yolivid Ortiz Vallejo
Lindsay Ann Brown	Rebecca Emenuga	LaTosha Hines	Maria McCollum	Devin Osborne
Veronica Buckley	Roselis Emiliano	Josh Hockenberry	Macy McFarland	Kathryn Ostrander
Talia Bukalov	Caitlin Epps	Stephanie Hodgson	Steven McGee	



NCHEC Welcomes New CHES®: October 2024 (cont.)

Victoria Otersen	Rachel Ralya	Lonnette Sancho	Tameya Strayhorn	Nin Nekaybaw Watson El
Lataisha Ousley	Jennifer Ramirez	Olivia Santiago	Emily Sutton	Kelley Wells
Lakisha Owens	Adriana Ramirez Feliciano	Samantha Santiago	McKenzie Swan	Ashley Wendt
Wasilat Oyekan	Rita Ravenna	Anthony Santiago Soto	Miya Tate	Ta'Kindra Westbrook
Melissa Padulsky	Nicole Rawls	Sheena Santos	Katherine Teigen	Karl Wheeler, Jr
Nadia Paknazhad	Debbie Rich	Natalie Schuette	Carolina Then	Dominique White
Parita Patel	Gisela Rijo	Rachel Scott	Jaeann Thomas	Katie Whitlow
Karen Pellicano	Francis Rivas	Maris Seabury	Melissa Thornton	Emma Whitman
Jasmine Pena	Ariana Rodriguez	Emma Sellers	Nelta Timothee	Aaron Wiggins
Silvia Penate	Anna Rodriguez	Thomas Senneway	Shiela Mae Tolentino	Jewel Williams
Ashley Peralta	Karen Rodriguez Ayala	Jaylin Sevrencia	Alexandra Traglia	Diamond Williams
Lauren Perez	Morgan Romenesko	Grace Sewell	Jeanna Tran	Erin Williams
Emily Perisho	Katie Romo	Yaashna Sharma	Elyssa Tucker	Tasia Williams
Stephanie Perkins	Noemi Romo	Kathryn Shillman	Christopher Tutino	Stephanie Williamson
Chazmin Peterson-Calip	Mackenzie Rose	Kylie Sholar	Ana Valenzuela	Marie Wilson
Kaitlyn Pettis	Lizza May Roson	Angeline Singleton	Joel Valvo	Stacie Wilson
Alma Pham	Rayna Ross	Bernadette Smith	Thai Vang	Amulen-Lalaf Wirsy
Karon Phillips	Gabrielle Roszman	Hannah Lisa Smith	Elizabeth Vargas	Mikaela Wittmer
Kelsey Picatello	Dakiah Rowe	Sofia Smith	Michael Vega	Karen Woodall
Monique Plears	Zachary Rubin	Alison Snook	Briana Villari	JaDa Woodley
Ariana Porras	Ellen Rudolph	Junghee Sohn	Genina Villarreal	Zoey Xian
Paris Pryor-Banks	Roseann Russell	Zakoya Spikes	Kayla Visser	Courtney Yang
Carolina Puckett	Rachel Sadlon	Allie Stanfield-Paramore	Joseph Vogl	Jennifer Young
Jorge Quintana	Anusha Sajja	Daniel Sterling	Larissa Walsh	Sarah Young
Antonio Quintana	Basheera Samad	Leah Sternberg	Mayra Wanderley	Taylor Zingg
Geneveive Raguindin	Shaye Samp	Grace Stevens	Jacob Ward	Christiana Ziworitin-Ogola
Latifat Raifu	Muriel Samuels	John Stewart	Kourtney Warner	
Matthew Raiti	Juliana Sanchez-Torres	Ashton Stewart		



NCHEC Welcomes New MCHES®: October 2024



The following is a list of those who earned the distinct title of Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES®) in the October 2024 examination. Those who opted not to be published are excluded from the list.

Tazeen Ahmed	Laura Calvert	Veronica Lozano	Stacey Pinnock	Mary Walsh
Brigitte Bailey	Elizabeth DeLuca-Kontchou	Natalia Maikranz	Kathryn Plante	Allita Watkins
Kayilan Baker	Akilah Flowers	Oscar Martinez	Luz Razo	Cathy Whaley
Melissa Bales	LaKeasha Glaspie	Sadie May	Angel Reyes	Marlaina Widmann
Caress Baltimore	Ethan Greenblatt	Carolyn Menard	Stephanie Rockford	Terra Winter
Michele Bayley	Ashley Hartman	Kelley Moultry	Sarah Sawmiller	Hilary Wiseman
Jacquelyn Bezy	Danielle Healis	Sharon Munroe	Stephanie Sojka	Cassandra Worner
Barbara Blackwell	Layal Helwani	Lincoln Ninnah	Gretchen M.Tanbonliong	Alexandra Wride
Brandon Bogert	Catherine Hill	Andrew O'Neil	Mary Taylor	Avis Wright
Ashley Breth	Megan Johnson	Olivia Osaji		

2024 Outstanding Service and Leadership Award Deadline: January 31, 2025



NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE OR EMPLOYER

Individuals nominated for this award will currently hold an active CHES® or MCHES® credential, or a retired credential (RCHES or RMCHES) and will have completed one or more of the following:

- initiated programs that produce a community-wide, state, or national impact
- promoted the CHES® or MCHES® credential within an organization
- advanced the profession of health education/promotion on a local/community, state or government level

There are two individual nomination categories:

- **Emerging Professionals Category:** (new professional in the field of health education and promotion <5 years)
- **Established Professionals Category:** (established professional with >5 years in the field of health education and promotion)

APPLY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY HERE

Organizations/Employers nominated for this award will have completed one or more of the following:

- valued the certification of CHES® and MCHES® on staff
- implemented programs or policies that promote the role of certified health education specialists
- used the professional knowledge of CHES® or MCHES® to implement programs benefiting the health and welfare of communities/populations
- supported the continuing competency/education of staff

APPLY FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL CATEGORY HERE

2023 Leadership Award Recipients



Barbara McCall, MCHES®

Brandon Johnson, MCHES®

MCHES® High Scorer: October 2024

Andrew O'Neil, MPH, MCHES®, CPH

Andrew O'Neil is a PhD candidate in Public and Community health at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. He is dedicated to enhancing the sexual health and well-being of sexually minoritized men, particularly those living in rural areas. His research focuses on biomedical HIV and STI prevention uptake, HIV care continuum engagement, and sexual well-being of this population. Andrew is a graduate research assistant in the Prevention and Implementation Science Training (PAIST) Lab within the Center for AIDS Intervention Research (CAIR) at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He earned his MPH in Rural and Underserved Populations from Oklahoma State University in 2021.



Why MCHES®?

I chose to pursue the MCHES® credential to enhance my professional development as I am nearing the completion of my PhD. MCHES® certification communicates to colleagues and community members that I am part of a community of committed advanced-level practitioners. Maintaining this certification will allow me to stay educated on the latest knowledge in health education, especially related to the health education that I provide to clients seeking HIV testing services.



NCHEC Staff Members

Executive Director

Melissa Opp, MPH, MCHES®, ICE-CCP
mopp@nchech.org | ext. 11

Credentialing Project Specialist

Misozi Houston, MPH, MCHES®
mhouston@nchech.org | ext. 16

Exam and Operations Manager

Tanya Cole
tcole@nchech.org | ext. 12

Continuing Education Coordinator

Mimi Byelick
mbyelick@nchech.org | ext. 14

Financial Manager

Lisa Petrone
Lpetrone@nchech.org | ext. 15

Communication Specialist

Jessica Wessner
jwessner@nchech.org | ext. 10

Credentialing Application Specialist

Leah Callwood, MPH, CHES®
lcallwood@nchech.org | ext.

Administrative Coordinator

Madelin Espinosa
admin@nchech.org | ext. 18

NCHEC is governed by a 12-person Board of Commissioners and two 7-person and one 11-person Division Boards. Each division board addresses one of the three activities noted in NCHEC's mission: certification, professional development and professional preparation. All directors and commissioners are elected volunteers and are active credential-holders, with the exception of the public member who is appointed by the Board of Commissioners.

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Ronesia Jenkins, MPH, CHES®, CWPC

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Derek Cegelka, PhD, MPH, CHES®

Tina Marie Devlin, MPH, MCHES®

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Editor: Jessica Wessner, NCHEC Staff

Copy-editors: Kathy Janes Jenkins, MCHES®, Kadi Bliss, MCHES®, Holly Moses, MCHES®, Beth Chaney, MCHES®



NCHEC

National Commission
for Health Education Credentialing
Credentialing Excellence in Health Education