

Press Release

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Maine Public Health Association Wins 2021 APHA Affiliate of the Year Award

Each year, the American Public Health Association (APHA) recognizes and celebrates a state affiliate for its public health excellence and accomplishments. On Saturday, October 23, 2021, Maine Public Health Association was recognized as the recipient of APHA's 2021 Outstanding Affiliate of the Year Award.

"Thank you to APHA for recognizing our hard work with this award; we are so honored. I am proud of the work we do across sectors and levels of government, forming partnerships at the community, state, and regional levels," said Rebecca Boulos, MPHA Executive Director. "While we are a small organization with just two full-time staff, we are committed to our mission of improving and sustaining the health and wellbeing of all people in Maine through health promotion, disease prevention and the advancement of health equity. We want to thank our more than 550 members, our regional, statewide and community partners and funders, and the MPHA board for their commitment to improving public health and health equity in Maine."

"MPHA is the leading public health advocacy, education, and coalition builder in the state," said Dr. Noah Nesin, MPHA Board President. "Over the past few years, and with the leadership of our Executive Director, Rebecca Boulos, I have watched MPHA grow its staff and advocacy capacity, the diversity of its partnerships, and the reach and impact of its education, engagement, and advocacy efforts. This growth has advanced the visibility of public health, the connections between racism and health, climate change and health, and the critical importance of investing in a strong and nimble public health system that integrates municipal, community, and state level efforts."

"We appreciate our longstanding partnership with MPHA," said Nirav D. Shah, Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. "The Association's assistance with Maine's pandemic response through support for municipal and community-based efforts, virtual trainings about infectious disease surveillance, vaccination, and communications skills, and multi-channel media campaigns have helped promote public health education and messaging."

"We have greatly appreciated MPHA's leadership on climate change, through co-chairing the Maine Climate Council's Community Resilience Planning, Public Health and Emergency Management Working Group, and by serving as a valued member of the Council's Equity Subcommittee," said Hannah Pingree, Director of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation & Future. "MPHA's contributions have ensured that public health is central to Maine's urgent work to help our communities and people prepare for effects of climate change."

"MPHA has been a supportive training and advocacy partner to New Mainers Public Health Initiative," said Abdulkarim Said, Executive Director of New Mainers Public Health Initiative. "As an organizational member of MPHA, we are particularly pleased they won the Outstanding Affiliate of the Year Award. Congratulations, MPHA!"

“As the Region 1 Public Health Training Center, we have worked with Maine Public Health Association for years to improve public health workforce development. MPHA is a strong training partner that consistently procures high-quality presenters and content, attracting learners from across New England,” said Karla Todd Barrett, Director of New England Public Health Training Center. “Our workforce partnership is foundational for building solutions to the challenges facing Mainers, and for sharing those lessons with others. MPHA is so worthy of this award, and we offer our sincere congratulations.”

“Maine Public Health Association is among the few state affiliates with paid staff, and the staff do incredible work,” said Lindsey Wahowiak, Director of APHA Affiliate Affairs. “The Association has received several awards at APHA over the past few years, including APHA’s Center for Climate, Health and Equity’s inaugural Excellence in Climate Leadership Award, and hosting the 2019 APHA Student of the Year, Emily Bartlett. We appreciate all that MPHA does to promote public health and health equity in Maine. This year’s recognition as Outstanding Affiliate of the Year is well-deserved – congratulations, MPHA!”

Other award winners were:

- Kim Boyd, Colorado Public Health Association: Award for Excellence
- Delaine Anderson, Minnesota Public Health Association: Outstanding Student of the Year
- Kim Dittman, North Carolina Public Health Association: Outstanding Affiliate Staff of the Year
- Moose Alpern, Emory University: Innovation in Public Health

About Maine Public Health Association

The Maine Public Health Association is the state’s oldest, largest, and most diverse association for public health professionals. We represent more than 500 individual members and 50 organizations across the state. As a statewide nonprofit association, we advocate, act, and advise on critical public health challenges, aiming to improve the policies, systems, and environments that underlie health inequities – but which also have potential to improve health outcomes for all people in Maine. Learn more: www.mainepublichealth.org.