New Staff Introductions

Ahmed Al Momen is a fourth year candidate for a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering at Northeastern University. He is on his first co-op with Environmental Health and Safety and will be assisting the team with lab safety inspections, reviewing chemical inventories, as well as the upkeep of the EH&S software system and training records. Additionally, he assists with logging data and reporting to state agencies for the various wastewater pretreatment systems on campus. Outside of work and school, Ahmed enjoys volunteering, hiking and spending time outdoors.

Getzabel Guevara is a 2014 graduate of Northeastern University with a degree in Biochemistry and a minor in Environmental Science. As a Biosafety Specialist, she will be assisting in the implementation of various elements of the Biosafety Program that involve the use of infectious agents, human materials, recombinant DNA and synthetic nucleic acids/toxins, as well as other tasks. Prior to joining EH&S, Getzabel worked at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in a Developmental Biology Research Lab as the lead research technician. When she is not working, Getzabel enjoys spending time with her dogs and traveling.

Evan Saravo is excited to return to Northeastern University in the role of EH&S Specialist. Throughout his college years attending Keene State College, he worked with both the NU EH&S department and grounds crew over summer breaks. Prior to returning to NU, Evan worked in EH&S roles in both the biotech and construction industries. The majority of his time will be spent performing compliance assistance and audits within the laboratories. He will also help maintain and inspect safety equipment and provide guidance to lab personnel on EH&S requirements.
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Andrew Sullivan joins the Office of Environmental Health and Safety as the Hazardous Materials Program Manager. In this role, he will provide leadership and overall management of the campus-wide hazardous waste program, chemical inventory system, and environmental regulatory compliance. Prior to joining Northeastern University, Andrew worked for CVS Health and General Electric where he managed various EHS programs. Andrew received his Bachelor’s Degree in Environmental Studies from Keene State College. In his free time, Andrew enjoys hiking, surfing, playing with his dog and jamming on the guitar! Andrew lives in Roslindale, MA with his fiancé Cate, and their chocolate lab, May.

Jamie Tessler joins the Office of Environmental Health and Safety department as the Training Program Manager following a long career researching, designing and conducting occupational health and safety training programs. She is also an occupational ergonomist with extensive experience in a wide range of industries. In the research field, Jamie has designed tools to measure musculoskeletal exposures and company safety management systems, and has led many fieldwork research teams. Her research, policy and practical experience guides her approach to evidence-based employee training across the literacy spectrum. In her new role at EH&S, Jamie will work on enhancing training programs, maintaining database systems and managing the EH&S software system.

OLD NEWSLETTERS

Interested in a previous issue? Older issues of the newsletter can be found on our website located at this address: https://www.northeastern.edu/ehs/ehs-programs/laboratory-safety/laboratory-safety-newsletter/
Office Ergonomics – Tips on how to improve your work station setup

The majority of us find ourselves working at a desk for a good portion of our workday, so why not take some time to set it up in a way that will improve our comfort? Webster’s dictionary defines ergonomics as “an applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely.” Although our desks and products used at offices have changed over time, the basic principles of ergonomics can still be applied today. Use the following recommendations to help improve your current work station setup:

1. **Monitor height** – The majority of folks believe the higher the monitor is positioned, the better. This is incorrect. When you are focused on an area directly in front of you, if something falls below your field of vision you have a tendency to use your eyes to look downwards. If something goes above your field of vision, you have a tendency to turn your neck upwards. Assess where your monitor is positioned in relation to your field of vision. Adjust your monitor so that you are eye level with the upper 1/3 of the screen.

2. **Monitor position** – Distance away from your computer monitor is also important. It is recommended that your monitor(s) be positioned about an arm’s length away from you while you’re typing. If you have two (2) monitors in use, consider how much you utilize each monitor independently. If you’re using one monitor 70% of the time or more than the other monitor, position the one you’re using the most directly in front of you and have the second monitor off to the side but as close as possible to your main monitor. If you use your monitors equally, split the difference and have where both monitors touch be directly in front of you. This reduces the amount and severity your neck will need to turn when moving from one screen to the other.

3. **Height in relation to desk** – While many desks are designed at a “standard” height, people come in many different shapes and sizes. Even though the desk may not be able to adjust to you, you should have the ability to adjust to the desk height. If your keyboard and mouse are utilized on the desktop surface, adjust the height of your chair so that your elbows are about even with the desktop. If utilizing a keyboard tray, adjust the height of your chair so that your elbows are even with the keyboard tray surface.
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4. **Do you need a footrest?** – After adjusting the height of your chair, you may notice your thighs are at a downward angle or your feet barely touch the floor. Using a footrest will help provide support for you in this case, as it will return your thighs to be parallel with the floor and your knees are maintaining a 90° angle. This will also help you sit back into your chair and allow it to provide lumbar support and more overall comfort.

5. **To sit or to stand, that is the question** – Sit/stand workstations have been the popular product with regard to ergonomics, however is it something that will benefit you? The answer is maybe. With publications and recommendations to utilize a standing desk, not much education is provided to explain how best to use a sit/stand workstation. Similar to the push of not being sedentary 100% of the time, you also do not want to stand 100% of the time. The benefit comes with a combination of the two or alternating from seated to standing over the course of the work day. It is recommended to switch from seated to standing and vice versa every 30 to 60 minutes. You can still benefit in a similar way by taking frequent “micro breaks” or walking around as frequently as your schedule allows.

Northeastern University has an Ergonomics program available to faculty and staff. If you have additional concerns with regard to ergonomics, please submit an Ergonomic Evaluation request through our online portal: [https://www.northeastern.edu/ehs/ehs-programs/ergonomics/ergonomic-evaluation-request/](https://www.northeastern.edu/ehs/ehs-programs/ergonomics/ergonomic-evaluation-request/)


**TRAINING**

EH&S provides a number of safety trainings to the community it serves. To get an updated list of scheduled trainings click the following link: [https://www.northeastern.edu/ehs/training/classroom-training-schedule/](https://www.northeastern.edu/ehs/training/classroom-training-schedule/)