



THE ACADEMY OF BOARD CERTIFIED ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS

# Newsletter

JANUARY 2008

## *A Note from the ABCEP President*

It is time for change and change is now. We know that you haven't heard from us in a while. This newsletter represents the Board of Trustees effort to change that and to better communicate with our members. We have established a newsletter committee comprised of Dick McGucken, Bob Michaels, and Robert Esenwein. These gentlemen plan to issue a newsletter on a quarterly basis but this is your newsletter as well and we would welcome contributions of news items from our members.

We welcome our new executive administrator, Nadine Jackson-Bey and thank our outgoing Peter Gottfried for a job well done. Our new address is:

ABCEP  
P.O. Box 42564  
Towson, MD 21284-2564

Telephone: 866-767-8073

As you may recall, The Board of Trustees developed a CEP In Training (CEP-IT) program for environmental professionals who do not yet have the required years of experience to qualify for the CEP. This program is explained below. If you know of persons who would be eligible to join as either CEP or CEP-IT, please let us know or direct them to our website.

It is also time for you to give some thought as to how we can make ABCEP work better for each of you and how you can become more active in the organization.

We welcome your suggestions on how the Board of Trustees can better serve the members, grow the organization, and increase the recognition of the CEP. We also encourage you to become involved with activities that will aid in your CEP maintenance program. Your involvement is very necessary in making the ABCEP certification a meaningful environmental credential.

And, lastly, it is with great sorrow that I announce the loss, last November, of a long-standing member of NAEP and ABCEP and a highly regarded environmental professional. Jim Roberts, CEP died on 25 November at age 73. We will not only miss Jim's expertise and willingness to contribute considerable amounts of his time and energy toward the advancement of the environmental profession but his kindness, thoughtfulness and presence.

I hope to see you at the NAEP Conference in San Diego in March, where ABCEP will hold its annual meeting.

*Irving D. Cohen, CEP*

## *Help Us Grow ABCEP*

Please help us grow our organization to increase the recognition of the CEP. We have initiated a new CEP-IT program, which is explained below. Please pass the word to your employees or other environmental professionals with whom you are

acquainted. If you know environmental professionals who qualify for full CEP status, please let us know so we can contact them.

New environmental professionals are welcome to join our new Certified Environmental Professional – In Training program (CEP-IT). This program is for those environmental professionals who do not yet meet the requirements of a CEP, but who would like to take advantage of some of the benefits that a CEP offers. If you know individuals who may be interested in this program, please forward them the outline of this program presented below, or have them contact ABCEP at [abcep.org](http://abcep.org) for more information.

### **CEP-IT Application Requirements are Simple**

To receive a CEP In-Training certificate, individuals must:

1. Submit application form (similar to CEP)
2. Enclose 1/2 the application fee of a CEP (currently  $\$125/2 = \$62.50$ ).
3. Submit transcript that indicates the individual has at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited university in an applicable field (same as CEP).
4. Sign an ethics pledge (same as CEP).
5. Provide 3 references (using same form as for CEP)

### **CEP-ITs Gain Immediate Access to a CEP Mentor**

As soon as a CEP-IT's application is deemed completed, the ABCEP Executive Director will notify the chair of the ABCEP Mentor Committee, who will assign a CEP mentor to that individual. This is a great opportunity for a new environmental professional to receive guidance from an experienced person who is highly regarded in this field. The CEP-IT is welcome to contact the mentor as needed to discuss

progress, to solicit feedback regarding the CEP-IT's career, and to obtain suggested opportunities for growth. CEPs who supervise a CEP-IT gain hours toward their annual maintenance requirements, so the CEP-IT can be assured that the mentor is motivated to provide support to the CEP-IT as needed for their mutual benefit.

### **CEP-IT Maintenance Requirements Help Advance Careers**

To maintain a CEP In-Training certificate, individuals must:

1. Report at least 20 hrs of annual effort to maintain In-Training status (using the same form used by CEPs).
2. Submit an annual maintenance fee of half the requirements for CEP maintenance (currently  $\$100/2 = \$50$ ).
3. Submit a form briefly describing career goals and plans for meeting them (see the new career plan form). This form is forwarded to the mentor for review. Meeting the goals is not a requirement for maintaining CEP-IT status, but submitting a plan is required.

### **A CEP-IT Certificate Reduces Requirements to Obtain a CEP**

If an individual receives a CEP-IT and maintains it for at least three years, CEP requirements for total experience are reduced by one year, as shown below.

### **Years of Experience Required to Apply for CEP Without CEP-IT**

Bachelor's Degree	9 years
Master's Degree	8 years
Ph.D	7 years

### **Years of Experience Required to Apply for CEP With a CEP-IT for at least 3 years**

Bachelor's Degree	8 years
Master's Degree	7 years
Ph.D	6 years

Those CEP applicants who are not certified because of a lack of experience have

the option of becoming a CEP-IT to get an early start on becoming a CEP

### **Additional Benefits of a CEP-IT**

Besides access to an assigned CEP mentor who will provide career guidance and a reduced CEP experience requirement, the CEP-IT provides the following additional benefits:

1. Electronic newsletter
2. Access to CEP website
3. Access to CEP members
4. Notices of CEP Board meetings
5. Notices of CEP member meetings
6. Notification to existing and potential employers that the individual is recognized by the environmental profession
7. Better understanding of the environmental profession
8. Contacts that will reduce effort needed to become a CEP
9. Enhanced personal qualifications on proposals submitted to clients
10. Enhanced to opportunities to participate on ABCEP committees and at ABCEP-sponsored events
11. Authorization by ABCEP to put "CEP-IT" on business cards, resumes, and signature title
12. Increased salary for organizations that reward staff with professional certifications
13. Increased potential for career advancement

For those of you who are new to the environmental profession, consider applying for a Certified Environmental Professional In Training. For those of you who know potential candidates for this certification, reach out and let them know about this new program. Achieving a CEP-IT could be an important milestone in a successful career in this field.

*Licensing and Certification: Why We Should Care About the Difference*

A few years ago, Charles Calhoun P.E. , President of the American Society of Civil Engineers Coasts, Ports, Rivers, and Waterways Institute (COPRI) wrote a short piece in the COPRI Waterways newsletter describing the importance of board certification for engineers practicing in certain key specialty areas. ( Waterways, 2004 [www.copriinstitute.org](http://www.copriinstitute.org)).

Mr. Calhoun observed that, 'my physician has brochures prominently displayed in his office that say, 'your physician is certified by the American Board of...' and follows with a description of what certification is, what is required to become certified, and what certification means to the patient.' Since all physicians must be licensed in the state where they practice, should not the license alone be enough to ensure the physician is qualified and proficient in his or her specialty? Why should one care about the 'Board Certified' certificate on the wall next to the license?

The reason one should care according to Mr. Calhoun is that, 'the license allows the physician to legally practice medicine, but does not reflect the competence of the physician in the specialty area. The competency factor is not evaluated by the state, but by a private, independent, non-profit board of physicians within the specialty area. That board establishes competency standards and evaluates physicians on the standards through examination and practice requirements. This 'board certification' process and maintenance of competency lets the patient know the physician has met the requirements established by the profession to practice the specialty.

Engineers can be licensed in states to practice engineering but, with some exceptions, this alone does not reflect competency or expertise in any specialty area. How can clients be protected and professional trust be maintained? The ASCE has established specialty certification programs for civil engineers and even set

up a Civil Engineering Certification Board ( an independent non-profit subsidiary of ASCE) which will develop a certification program and be governed by an eight person Board of Directors. This development in the engineering profession recognizes that specialty practice areas require highly focused education and experience ( coastal engineering is but one example). Not all engineers have the sort of background and experience this and other specialties require. So, to maintain a high standard of care for clients and the public, the launching of specialty certification is a logical outcome.

This example fits well with what the Academy has been accomplishing with board certification of environmental professionals. Professionals having varied educational and experience backgrounds, including engineering, may find themselves working for years in one of the environmental specialties ( documentation, planning, impact assessment, compliance). At some point it is reasonable to ask oneself, 'how am I able to validate this experience? ' How can I verify to the client communities and to the public, that I have the knowledge to practice my specialty?' Board Certification is a clear answer to these questions.

The ABCEP Trustees have been working diligently to ensure that the CEP designation is the most rigorous and desirable professional certification for the environmental professional. The Trustees subjected the certification program itself to the Council on Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards and received accreditation so that CEPs and others know that the certification process itself is substantive in content and in its administration. The CEP designation is something clients and the public can trust to deliver competent guidance, counsel, direction, and solutions for a wide range of environmental issues.

Please give us feedback on the concept of professional certification and the meaning it

has or should have to our clients and to the public whom we aim to serve.

*This item was provided by Robert Esenwein CEP, ABCEP Trustee and Board Secretary, and Member of the ASCE COPRI Wetlands and Sediment Management Committee*

### *New Members*

The Board of Trustees welcome the following people who earned their CEP in 2007:

Jeffrey Angiel  
David M. Bell  
Richard Demkovitch  
Suntemple M. Helgren  
Dawn M. Hess  
Robert Hickey  
Heidi Hirsh  
Elizabeth R. Johnson  
David Keys  
Robert A. Mattson  
Linda Rice

Congratulations.

### *Jim Roberts in My Career, in My Life*

*By Bob Michaels; PhD, CEP*

Jim Roberts, CEP died on 25 November at age 73. He was a part of my career and social life for more than two decades. My computer organizer lists the routine task "call Jim Roberts," completed on 11 February 1997. I remember the decades of shared events that occasionally brought us together geographically, but I cannot reconstruct most of the myriad of routine interactions that better characterize the pervasiveness of Jim's presence in my career. Being unable to reconstruct the submerged part of the iceberg that constitutes the body of our professional interactions, I will focus upon several of our shared experiences, the photogenic

exposed part rising above the murky depths.

Actually, we always met warmly, and in warm places, nowhere near icebergs, at annual conferences of the *National Association of Environmental Professionals* (NAEP). NAEP, an international organization despite its name, wisely scheduled annual meetings in spring. That helped motivate cold climate members like myself, in upstate New York, to attend and thereby experience warmer weather early, for up to a week each year. Jim often came with his wife Sylvia, and she was one of us after hours, when we got to socialize at interesting local restaurants. Often they were ethnic, such as the Bush Garden Japanese Restaurant in Portland, Oregon on 26 April 2004. I had the sashimi, and our large group shared various appetizers.

**NAEP Board of Directors.** Jim and I served together for many years on NAEP's Board of Directors. As Chairperson of the *Certification Review Board* (CRB) of the *Academy of Board Certified Environmental Professionals* (ABCEP) since 1993 I have been an *ex officio* NAEP Board member. In contrast, Jim earned his seat the hard way, by being elected. The NAEP Board typically was big, and Board members bickered. Over the years, Jim effectively overcame bickering by synthesizing and communicating the bigger picture, and restoring our too-often forgotten appreciation that we all were working toward a common, worthy cause. Jim knew how to use Robert's Rules, by which we functioned, to catalyze beneficial Board actions where administrative constraints threatened to derail us from taking them. To this day, even as a Robert, I do not know to what extent Jim used Robert's Rules or Roberts' Rules; and I doubt anyone cares. Jim always served as our official and our unofficial 'parliamentarian'; essentially a wise, eloquent, and revered sergeant-at-arms.

**Health Impact Assessment Workshop.** In 2006 we met in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jim had caught the HIA bug, whose symptoms consisted of an urge to promote the emerging discipline of health impact assessment (HIA). He got me involved as a practitioner of the related discipline of health risk assessment, and I made a presentation at Jim's HIA Workshop about my involvement in the controversial issue of dredging PCB-bearing sediments from 'hotspots' in the Hudson River. The presentation was well received, and the Managing Editor of NAEP's journal, *Environmental Practice* (EP) published by Cambridge University Press, asked when I would be submitting a manuscript for publication. As a member of EP's Editorial Board, I was expected to contribute, so EP was a natural place to submit my manuscript. The meeting proved important for me, and my paper with co-author Uriel M. Oko recently was published, in the June issue of *Environmental Practice*... all catalyzed by Jim Roberts. One more shared professional activity: Until his death, Jim served with me as a member of the EP Editorial Board.

**ABCEP Certification Review Board.** As CRB Chairperson since 1993 I have consistently striven to recruit the most highly qualified Board Certified Environmental Professionals (CEPs) to join the CRB. Jim was one of these, a prize when he finally agreed to join, around 2002. We were a collegial group who functioned well together, never bickering... yes, never, not even once in my memory. We could take actions with a majority vote, but we respected dissenters, and usually achieved unanimous support for our actions. We acted via e-mail and, annually, face-to-face at NAEP's annual conference. I am proud to say that Jim's skill as a parliamentarian never was needed on the CRB; but his competence, good judgment, and pleasant disposition were appreciated by us all, especially at our face-to-face meetings.

**ABCEP Trustees.** Jim left the CRB to serve on ABCEP's Board of Trustees, around 2004. Again, as CRB Chairperson I serve *ex officio* as an ABCEP Trustee, whereas Jim earned his seat the hard way. We all earned it the hard way after appointment, however, as we worked hard and we worked productively. In addition to meeting face-to-face once or twice each year, we met over the phone monthly. As always, Jim's wisdom and winning personality shone. I am saddened that Jim succumbed to cancer invading one of his two most admired parts: his heart and his mind. My personal and professional life have been enriched by my association with Jim Roberts, who will always have a place in my memory and in my heart.

*Robert Michaels, PhD, CEP is an ABCEP Trustee and Chairman of the Certification Review Board.*