

HUGH NELSON AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE



Occupational
Hygiene Association
of Ontario

Hugh M. Nelson, B.Eng., M.Sc., P. Eng., C.I.H. (Ret.)

"A Pioneer Canadian Occupational Hygienist"

Hugh Nelson was born in Amherst, Nova Scotia on April 26, 1925. After serving abroad in the Air Force for three years (1943-45), he studied at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick from 1947-1949 for a certificate in Engineering. In 1951, he obtained a B.Eng. Degree in Chemical Engineering from McGill University in Montreal. After spending one year at Alcan in Quebec, Hugh joined the Government of Ontario where he stayed until his retirement.

During his tenure with the government, he held various positions of increasing responsibilities ranging from Industrial Hygiene Engineer to the Director of the Occupational Health Branch. Hugh started working with the Division of Industrial Hygiene of the Ontario Department of Health in 1952 and retired from the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Ontario Ministry of Labour in 1982. As the Chief of the Industrial Hygiene Section of the Occupational Health Services of the Ontario Department of Health during the '60's and '70's, he had enormous impact in shaping the future of the Canadian Industrial Hygiene profession. Hugh was a central figure during the period of 1958-1980, when immense regulatory changes took place in health and safety initiatives and the protection of workers in Ontario. He was directly and indirectly instrumental in creating in Canada what we now have, a small but strong and thriving industrial hygiene community. His influence in this field has spread beyond Ontario to other provinces and internationally through many of the professionals who trained under him or benefited from his association.

Hugh always set the highest standard of professionalism. He was the first Canadian to obtain certification by examination of the American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH) at its inaugural sitting in 1963. He was one of six

individuals who met in Toronto on January 10, 1964 to establish the Southern Ontario Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), the organization that later became the Occupational Hygiene Association of Ontario (OHAO). He served as its president, and was one of the seven Honourary members of the OHAO. Hugh also served as a Director of ABIH from 1981-1986.

All through his career, Hugh gave unselfishly towards the promotion of training and education in occupational hygiene. He was in large part responsible for the one week long training programs in industrial hygiene offered using the resources of his group and the other members of occupational health services during the late '60's and '70's, when there was no such training of any description available in Canada. Hugh always enjoyed sharing his knowledge as many of his students at the University of Toronto programs, and the Humber College program will attest. Equally, attendees at short training programs, conferences, and workshops have always benefited from his numerous presentations.

Hugh's interest in continuing learning is evidenced by the fact that despite heavy job commitments, he found time to conduct research and obtain his Master's Degree from the School of Hygiene at the University of Toronto in 1976 for his work on silica flour exposure in Ontario (Nelson et al, AIHAJ, vol 39, pp 261-269), where he proposed a TLV for silica flour.

People who trained under him will readily attest to his highest quality of mentorship, not only in technical skill, but also for his integrity, moral and ethical behaviour. He was a great humanitarian who always treated people fairly and with respect, regardless of which walk of

life they came from.

Hugh Nelson passed away on Tuesday, December 20, 2011. The Occupational Hygiene Association of Ontario has lost someone who will be remembered as a pioneer, a past-president, an honorary member, leader, mentor and friend.

Criteria

The ***Hugh Nelson Award of Excellence in Occupational Hygiene*** may be presented annually to an individual who has worked or is working as an occupational hygiene professional in a full-time capacity. The recipient of the award will receive a cash award and a plaque.

The Hugh Nelson Award of Excellence in Occupational Hygiene Committee has developed the following criteria to assist OHAO members to nominate candidates for this prestigious award:

Nominee must be:

- An accredited and recognized practitioner in the field of occupational hygiene or a closely related occupational health and safety discipline; and
- A current or past member of OHAO with a record of service to the Association.

In addition, the recipient must have significantly advanced or contributed to the profession in ways that may include:

- Acting within government, industry or the community in ways that contribute to improving the health and safety of workers;
- Contributing to the occupational hygiene profession as a practitioner, researcher, teacher, mentor, and/or innovator;
- Improving the knowledge base of the profession by:
 - publishing in peer reviewed journals and/or recognized

occupational health and safety magazines; or

- presenting at symposia, workshops and/or conferences;
- Enhancing the prestige and professionalism of occupational hygiene by showing leadership and inspired cooperation within the profession, the workplace or the community;
- Any other contribution to the occupational hygiene profession and/or the health and safety of workers that is consistent with the legacy established by Hugh Nelson and the previous winners of this award.

All nominations must be received no later than Friday, January 19, 2024. The nominees will be contacted by the selection committee at which time they will be requested to submit detailed information regarding their achievements.

The award will be presented at the OHAO Annual General Meeting, March 2024.

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NOMINATION FORM

Please provide the following information for the individual you wish to nominate to:

Joanna Tam
Chair, Award Committee
6700 Century Ave, Ste 100
Mississauga, ON L5N 6A4

Name of Person Nominated: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

How many years have you known the individual being nominated? _____

In one paragraph, summarize your reason for nominating this individual.

Your Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

***Return to the OHAO by Friday, January 19, 2024
Email nomination to office@ohao.org***