

by **Richard Crume** and
Diana Kobus

Richard Crume is a member of IPEP's Board of Trustees, and **Diana Kobus** is IPEP's Executive Director.

Environmental Professional Intern Certification Now More Than Ever

In these tough economic times, students and recent graduates in the environmental sciences and engineering fields are seeking direction in their budding careers as they struggle to pay their tuition bills. Many students enroll in environmental programs because they want to make a positive difference in their communities and nation—many are inspired by President Obama's call to tackle the global warming issue—but these students also want, and deserve, some reasonable assurance that they will find jobs upon graduation. Several years ago the employment outlook was strong, anticipating vigorous economic growth and a monumental number of baby boomer retirements on the horizon. Today, finding a job right out of school is far less certain.

At a time when layoffs exceed job creation, students competing for limited employment opportunities need to stand out, and having a degree from a top university is not always enough. Employers want to see evidence that graduating students have worked hard to learn the fundamentals while going the extra mile to prepare for the challenges that lie ahead. One way an environmental student can demonstrate both competence and a high level of motivation is to become certified as an Environmental Professional Intern (EPI). This credential is available to qualified students about to graduate and also to environmental professionals who have entered the field within the past five years. It is the first step for many professionals in securing their Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) certification.

Both the EPI and QEP are administered by the Institute of Professional Environmental Practice (IPEP), formed in 1992 by a visionary group of A&WMA leaders seeing the need for a broad-based environmental credential. These visionaries have been joined over the years by other organizations, including

- American Academy of Environmental Engineers
- American Industrial Hygiene Association
- Carolinas Air Pollution Control Association
- Institute of Clean Air Companies
- National Association for Environmental Management
- Solid Waste Association of North America
- Water Environment Federation



Since its inception in 1993, IPEP has certified more than 1500 environmental professionals.

As a proud supporter of IPEP and the QEP and EPI certifications, A&WMA congratulates the newest* QEPs and EPIs on their outstanding achievement.

QEPs

Blair Corning, Commerce City, CO
Harold McElhoo, Oak Ridge, TN
Greg Gemgnani, Allentown, PA

Daniel Robeen, Fort Walton Beach, FL
Paul Scott, Pittsburgh, PA
Kerwei Sew, St. Paul, MN

Joseph Sorge, Somerville, NJ
Eric Welling, Indianapolis, IN
Michelle York, Corvallis, OR

EPIs

Jamie Akiki, Fayetteville, AR
Lindsay Baxter, Pittsburgh, PA
William Bond, Fayetteville, AR
William Drake, Fayetteville, AR
Valentine Forcha, Columbus, OH
Travis Gasnier, Fayetteville, AR
Erin Grantz, Fayetteville, AR

Orville Grey, Kingston, Jamaica
Derian Jackson, Kingston, Jamaica
Cody Johnson, Sanger, TX
Raghunatha Komaragiri, Torrance, CA
Kristy McCullough, Soldotra, AR
Angela Moore, Fayetteville, AR
Amanda Muir, Pittsburgh, PA

Latoya Palmer, Clarendon, Jamaica
Adam Poll, Santa Maria, CA
Matthew Reid, Fayetteville, AR
Tamarah Schultz, Victoria, TX
Stephen Steward, Fayetteville, AR
Christopher Stoneburg, Columbus, OH
Nathan Walker, Fayetteville, AR

**QEPs and EPIs certified after April 30, 2009, will be acknowledged in the August 2009 edition of IPEP Quarterly.*



The Institute of Professional Environmental Practice (IPEP) is a member of the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB), an independent organization that accredits engineering, scientific, and technology programs. For more information about IPEP and the QEP and EPI certifications, contact Certification Services Coordinator, IPEP, 600 Forbes Ave., 339 Fisher Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15282; phone 1-412-396-1703; fax: 1-412-396-1704; e-mail: ipep@duq.edu; web: www.ipep.org.

The EPI and QEP certifications were conceived with the intention of making it easier for those using the services of environmental professionals to identify competent and experienced individuals committed to a code of environmental ethics. In creating the EPI credential, IPEP recognized a growing need to promote and assist qualified professionals just entering the field and to instill in them a professional standard of ethical conduct. Today, the EPI is the only independent, international, and interdisciplinary credential that upholds standards of knowledge and ethical conduct for environmental students and recent graduates. The EPI is available to individuals meeting one of the following conditions:

- College or university seniors working on a technical baccalaureate or master's degree in physical, earth, or natural sciences; engineering; or mathematics.
- Individuals who have received a baccalaureate or master's degree in one of the above disciplines and have just entered the field, are anticipating entering the field, or have less than five years of qualifying environmental work experience.

Through IPEP, EPIs become part of an international network of highly skilled and well-trained environmental professionals that stretches across the traditional boundaries between industry, government, academia, and consulting. IPEP members are available to mentor EPIs, and

the lines of communication that can be opened through this membership network are invaluable for job-seekers and young professionals. As the world struggles in the midst of a serious economic recession, quality professional relationships and networking are more important than ever.

Students need encouragement to pursue their goals and to never give up, no matter how tough their individual circumstances. They need to learn by example that as environmental professionals, we must work together to find the most effective solutions to the energy, economic, and environmental issues we face as a global community. And they need to know what earlier generations learned during the Great Depression, two World Wars, and a terrorist attack on the United States—that the human spirit cannot be denied, and we will recover from the economic downturn stronger than ever.

The environmental profession can help students and young professionals facing today's challenges by promoting programs like the EPI that build the confidence and optimism needed to succeed in the global marketplace. As employers fill limited vacancies in the coming years, having an EPI certification is a clear signal to the hiring manager that the individual under consideration is really something special! **em**