

This is a collection of articles I created for attendees of the AIHce EXP 2018. In addition to these, I also interviewed a few of the speakers:

- [Up After Dark: The Silent Tsunami](#)
- [Up After Dark: Let's Talk Disaster Response](#)
- [Spotlight: AIHce EXP IH Heroes](#)

Showcase Your Experience Online Through AIHce EXP Social Media

If you're not using social media to stay connected with your industry and community, you could be missing out on vital connections. At AIHA, social media plays a big role in the way we connect with our members and the industry as a whole. Conferences like AIHce EXP provide a great opportunity to leverage social media networks to stay on top of conversations, even if you're not in a particular session. If you're attending our virtual conference, it'll be an easy way for you to network with attendees and speakers.

Staying connected with IH/OEHS professionals around the globe

Social media is an invaluable tool for communicating with industry professionals around the globe on a regular basis. One great way to do that is to find and follow key players within the community.

A great place to start, especially if you're a student or new to the industry? Universities. Follow official social media accounts of universities, as well as professors (if they're active), to stay informed in real time! Don't be shy - remember that the key word in social media is "social" so make sure you participate in the conversations that are relevant to your specialty.

In addition to universities, professional organizations in our field are also highly active on social media. You can follow heavy hitters like EPA, CDC, NIOSH, and OSHA to receive regular updates and participate in conversations within the community.

Make the most of your time at AIHce EXP with social media

Although AIHA has a very active social media presence, 2017 was the first time we really saw quality engagement specifically around the AIHce EXP conference in Seattle.

That's all thanks to you!

Our audiences were engaged across our active channels on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and even our newest channel, Instagram. But Twitter was the winner with over 10,400 impressions every day during the 7 days we were in Seattle!

“Also a first, the AIHA Network TV showed video recaps in four of our partner hotels, which helped catch up attendees on highlights from the prior day,” says Ben Rome, AIHA’s Marketing Manager. “We’re hoping to do the same again this year [in Philadelphia].” AIHA also hopes that members will utilize [the new community The Catalyst](#) to share their experiences with other members on the members-only platform.

So, how can you make the most of your time at AIHce EXP with the help of social media? We’ve got a few tips for you!

- **Don’t neglect the hashtag.** Our main hashtag across all networks is #AIHceEXP, so be sure to include it in all of your posts during the conference and even while exploring Philadelphia. Pro tip: Add the conference hashtag to your Twitter name or bio for the duration of the conference.
- **Do your homework on the speakers & instructors.** If you’re not familiar with a speaker, check out their website, read their writing, and peek through their social media activity. Why’s this important? It helps you become familiar with their expertise, their communication style, and how they interact with others at events, both online and offline. Follow the speakers on social media before the conference. This will give you an opportunity to engage with them and help you stand out in their mind when it’s conference time.
- **Remember - sharing is caring!** You’ve done your due diligence, and it’s go time. From the opening keynote to the closing session, there are lots of opportunities to share from the conference. Since Twitter is a public-facing platform, this will be the best option for you to share insights and key points in real time. A few nuggets to keep in mind:
 - Statistics are always great to share.
 - Stay away from inside jokes and points that don’t stand alone.
 - Always give credit to the speaker in your tweets.
 - Always use the conference hashtag.
 - If there are other people tweeting from your session, RT them instead of sharing the same exact statistic.

A final pro tip from Ben: “While we won’t have the photo booths from last year, there will be plenty of photo opportunities inside and outside the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The art displays throughout the center are stunning and deserve to be shared in pictures.”

Watch #AIHceEXP for info about our super-special "Meet-Peep-Tweet Up" on Monday night!

See you in Philadelphia, and around the internet!

EXPanding Your AIHce EXPerience

From the moment you pick up your badge at registration, your AIHce EXPerience will be jam-packed with sessions, networking, and walking around the Expo. We know that conferences can go by fast, which is why it's important to show up armed with a plan. Here are a few tips to make the most of your schedule during AIHce EXP in Philadelphia this year.

- **Look through the schedule ahead of time.** We've [got an incredible schedule](#) for you, which means that there are a lot of options for you to choose from for each session slot. Going through the schedule ahead of time and creating a personal agenda with the sessions you want to attend will make life that much easier for you during the conference. If you're attending the conference with colleagues, consider a divide and conquer strategy so you can cover the most within a short amount of time. Then, meet up later to discuss what you've learned.
- **Identify the exhibitors you want to meet.** Did you know that you can virtually explore our expo hall prior to the conference? [Our vendor list for the Expo hall](#) this year is amazing! If there are specific companies and individuals you want to talk to, make a note of their location and come up with a plan of action.
- **Practice your personal elevator pitch.** [You're going to meet a lot of new people](#) at the conference, and you'll want to make sure you're memorable! Don't forget to have your business cards ready. Don't forget to make a plan of attack for [engaging on social media](#) before and during the conference.
- **Don't be afraid to approach people, including speakers/instructors.** If you want to make connections in your industry, AIHce EXP is the perfect place to do it, which means your networking game needs to be on! The speakers and instructors at this conference love connecting with you, so don't hesitate to say "hello." We've been doing spotlights on our instructors on [this blog](#), so take a look at those posts as well.
- **Schedule time for self-care.** We know that conferences can get overwhelming, which is why it's important for you to also have time to decompress during AIHce EXP. You can go back to your hotel room between sessions & networking events, or even just [walk around the block in Philadelphia](#). There are also several health and wellness activities happening at [the Hub](#). From tips on healthy eating, to yoga and desk stretches, take a load off and make some time for you!

We're making sure that you have a plethora of options to choose from when it comes to sessions, networking, and making new connections at AIHce. It's up to you to craft the conference experience that makes most sense for you in Philadelphia in May. See you soon!

Low-Cost AIHce EXP Options for the Budget Challenged

Whether it's time away from the office or budget constraints, traveling to AIHce EXP can be difficult - and we know it. Fortunately, we've developed condensed and cost-effective options for individuals who cannot attend. From our professional development courses (PDCs), to our award-winning Virtual AIHce EXP, and our OnDemand conference option, there are options that work for everyone's budget - and schedule.

While our PDCs are separate from AIHce EXP, you can still enjoy high-quality professional development opportunities outside of the conference because our courses are held before and after the main event. If you can't attend the full conference due to a busy work schedule but are local to the Philadelphia area, a PDC may be the perfect solution for you.

[This year's PDCs](#) will be held on Saturday, May 19, Sunday, May 20, and Thursday, May 24. They are available as half-, one-, or two-day courses and there is a separate registration fee for each PDC. Boxed lunches are provided for all full-day courses as well as for those who register for two half-day courses occurring on the same day.

We're also offering a few PDCs virtually, too!

But what if you're not local to the Philadelphia area and still want a great AIHce EXP interactive experience at a fraction of the onsite cost? [We created our virtual AIHce EXP with you in mind](#). Conference keynotes and curated education sessions are brought directly to you - in real time!

You can get valuable education and inspiring keynotes delivered directly to your desktop – no travel required. And to facilitate extended learning throughout the year, access to the AIHce EXP OnDemand recordings is included with your registration. (OnDemand available after July 1, 2018.)

Learn more about this year's [Virtual AIHce EXP](#). If you can gather a group together to participate in the same room, there are no additional fees and everyone can earn credit. This is a really cost-effective way to have a conversation with your colleagues around the sessions, the lessons you learn, and how you can use that information to make an impact at your organization.

Watch sessions any time, according to your schedule! What could be better than that?

Kick-ass Networking Tips

We're just a few short weeks from AIHce EXP 2018 and our team cannot wait to see everyone in historic Philadelphia. It goes without saying that one of the best parts about attending is the networking opportunities. Whether you're at the beginning of your IH/OEHS journey or you're just looking to connect with more of your peers, AIHce EXP is the place to make a true impact.

Networking can feel overwhelming, especially as you go through your day meeting with tens, if not, hundreds of people. As the wise Ferris Bueller once said, "[AIHce EXP] moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

"It" being your opportunities to network, of course.

Our team has put together a few easy and actionable tips for you to make the most of your time with some kick-ass networking in Philadelphia this May.

- **Research speakers and attendees ahead of time.** If you haven't already started, now is the time to get to know our speakers, instructors, and your peers who will be attending in Philadelphia. By doing your research, you'll be better prepared for networking in person. (Protip: You can look up speakers in the app!)
- **Update your LinkedIn before leaving for Philadelphia.** Even if you're not looking for career opportunities, your LinkedIn profile is still a great way to put your best foot forward when heading to a conference. Has it been updated with your most recent position? Have you published any research that you haven't added to your profile? Is all of your information up-to-date? You may only have a couple of minutes with someone you meet for the first time at AIHce EXP. What can they learn from you when they look you up on LinkedIn?
- **Speaking of LinkedIn, use social media [and the conference app](#) to connect with others.** As you're doing your research to get to know the speakers, exhibitors, and attendees, be sure to see if they're active on social media. If so, connect with them ahead of time. This is an easy way to help break the ice and start a dialogue before you meet face-to-face in Philadelphia. On Twitter, be sure to follow [@AIHA](#) and the [#AIHceEXP hashtag](#).
- **Know your value proposition.** The most important question you can ask someone is "how can I help you?" so make sure your value proposition is clear. This is where the research we've been hinting at over the past couple of months becomes helpful.
- **Build in time for following up at the end of each day.** You're going to be meeting a lot of new people and collecting a lot of business cards during the conference. On the flipside, the people you meet will also be having the same experience. Strike while the iron's hot and send a connection/follow-up email during the conference, instead of waiting until you get home. The odds are, the speakers and peers you meet at the

conference will be using their downtime to catch up with email and work. Reaching out to them while your interaction is still fresh will make a memorable impression and may even create additional opportunities for face-to-face conversation before you leave Philadelphia.

Most importantly, remember to breathe and be yourself. We can't wait to see you in Philadelphia in just a few short weeks!

Great Health Practices Will Expand Your EXPerience

We would be remiss if we didn't talk about staying healthy during conference week! Whether you're a seasoned conference pro or this is your first time traveling, these tips will help you (and all of us) stay healthy during the hustle and bustle of the event.

- **Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.** It's easy to forget about your H₂O when grabbing your morning coffee before the sessions and networking with colleagues over lunch. It's especially important if you're going to be networking over drinks at happy hour or dinner at the end of the day! We want you to be healthy, alert, and well-hydrated so that you don't lose steam during the conference, or worse, go home sick.
- **Get fresh air as often as possible.** We know that going from the airport to the hotel to the conference center can feel like you're not getting any fresh air. Even if it's just a short walk around the block, try to take breaks throughout the day to get outside. The Pennsylvania Convention Center is a big space, but there are spots with easy access to step outside. Take advantage of that! Before and after each day's sessions, kill two birds with one stone by exploring the City of Brotherly Love with a water bottle in your hand.
- **Stay active.** One of the benefits of the Pennsylvania Convention Center is its walking score. It's easy to get those steps in when you're walking to your hotel, seeing the attractions, or meeting colleagues for dinner around the city. If you already have a regular fitness regimen, try to stick to that as much as possible during your time at the conference. It won't be difficult to do when you've got so many unique opportunities, like [climbing the Rocky steps](#). Or, take advantage of the health and wellness activities centrally located in the [Hub](#)! There'll be several mini-sessions focused on staying mindful and healthy including eating healthy on the road, desk stretches, meditation, and even yoga for the office.
- **Don't neglect your sleep.** Getting adequate sleep is really important at a busy conference to help you keep your stamina up and prevent you from getting sick. It's especially important if you're traveling from a different time zone and need to adjust because of jetlag. With this year's Late Night Sessions, you could even squeeze in a power nap after putting in a full day at the conference.
- **Practice good hygiene.** You're going to be shaking a lot of hands, spending hours in closed spaces, and well, we don't need to tell you guys about proper hygiene practices.

We look forward to sharing a healthy, hydrated, and active conference week with you in Philadelphia.

EXPanding and EXPloring the Conference Like a Pro

The moment you've waited months for is here! You made it to Philadelphia for AIHce EXP. You're ready to learn, network, and explore.

It doesn't matter if this is your first AIHce EXP or even first conference ever. We know that you're going to navigate the conference like a pro. In fact, people will probably be asking you for directions by lunch on the first day.

How do we know?

Because you've been preparing for this day. But let's make sure you've got everything checked off. We know that navigating a conference like this can feel overwhelming, which is why we've made it as easy as possible for you.

Get plugged in ... [To our app](#), that is. For AIHce EXP attendees, our mobile app is an essential tool to help you squeeze the most from your conference experience. Looking for a specific exhibitor? Find them on the map before stepping into the Expo Hall. Are you missing a session? Don't worry, the other attendees will be sharing their insights in the app and on social media!

Once you have the app downloaded, you'll want to [read this post](#) for a refresher on how you can elevate your success with the app throughout the conference.

Philadelphia at your feet. From the moment you step off the plane or the train, you'll know exactly how to find your way to your hotel and the convention center. You've already pinpointed where you're going to get a famous cheesesteak and of course, find the best coffee. Got your eyes on some historic sites? Our [EXPlore Philadelphia](#) guide has you covered.

Your networking research is about to pay off. All of your prep for the past few months is about to pay off. You've mapped out your schedule, did your research on the instructors, speakers, and other attendees, and even perfected your elevator pitch. This is what you've been waiting for. You're armed with questions for the companies in the expo hall. You even [freshened up on your social media skills](#) to stay connected with our community leading up to the AIHce EXP.

Self-care is fundamental. We'd hate for anyone to walk away from this event with the "conference crud." Whether you're a seasoned conference pro or this is your first time traveling, it's critical for you to stay healthy during the hustle and bustle of the event. If you're not familiar with the weather in Philadelphia, layers are always a good bet for traveling and conference attendance. It'll likely be in the mid-to-high 70s when we're in Philadelphia but we

always recommend checking the 10-day weather report before you finalize your packing! Need some quick and easy self-care tips? [Check out this post](#).

Well, do you feel like a pro yet? We know that even pros can have questions, and our staff will be with you every step of the way. Find us in the app and around the convention center during conference week.

Sparking Connections Through Catalyst

As an IH/OEHS professional, your days move pretty fast. Where do you turn when you're doing research or have a question about a non-critical issue? What if you had an online community that you could tap into at any time to ask questions or brainstorm ideas?

Enter [Catalyst](#)! Launched this past January, Catalyst is AIHA's online community where members can connect, ask questions, share knowledge, and network. "Think Reddit but for industrial hygiene and occupational & environmental health services professionals," says Liz Kincheloe, Catalyst's community manager. Liz has an impressive background in nonprofit advertising and launching websites. To be an even better community manager for our Catalyst members, Liz attended the [Higher Logic Super Forum](#) as the site came together.

Liz also helped create a strategy for the launch and set up a beta test group that ran for six weeks prior. This select group of 75 members helped shape Catalyst into the invaluable resource it is today.

"We created a community for them to ask questions and have discussions. This ended up being a great way to anticipate what to include in our FAQs, and to also identify a handful of members who would be a great resource as we continue to make navigation adjustments and more to the site," shares Liz.

Although Catalyst is an online venue for AIHA members to engage, share knowledge, and ask questions, volunteers who are non-members can also create content relevant to their working groups or task forces. The community is already robust with discussions. Liz tells us that discussions range from "topic specific questions/brainstorming on things like fentanyl, noise, Safety Matters, mold, asbestos, and chloroform (to name a few), to students and young professionals seeking help from more experienced IH/OEHS professionals."

You can also use the Library Entries, which is where the documents that have been uploaded to the site live. The library is a resource for locating information related to specific topics that members have been discussing, and also documents prepared as training references for Catalyst users.

How can you make the most of Catalyst?

"First, log in! A third of our membership has logged in, which is fantastic! We want everyone else in, too. So, log in and look around. Start with the Open Forum Community and take a look at the discussions posted. Use the search function if there is a specific topic of interest to find past discussions."

Learn more about Catalyst at AIHce EXP in Philadelphia!

“Catalyst will have a designated section of the AIHA booth at the conference. We will have computers set up for demos, and we will be there to answer any questions. I want to encourage attendees to come by and have their picture taken and I can help them get it uploaded to their profile.”

Liz will also be presenting a brief tutorial in the Hub Tuesday, 5/22 from 2:30-2:55 pm:

How to Be a Catalyst in 20 Minutes!

See what everyone is talking about! Take a quick dive into Catalyst, AIHA's newest member benefit. You will walk away equipped to navigate THE online community for IH/OEHS professionals where you can explore hot topics, ask questions, and share your knowledge. The last 5 minutes will be dedicated to answering your questions.

So, what are you waiting for? Log into Catalyst to engage with your fellow IH/OEHS colleagues and be sure to stop by to see Liz's presentation at the AIHce EXP.