



## Episode Title: Back to Work Safely -- A Conversation with Larry Sloan, CEO of the AIHA

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**Larry D. Sloan (LDS):** That's funny. I'd never noticed her as a pounder of table.

**Lynn L. Bergeson (LLB):** Only with my shoe.

**LDS:** I've known Lynn for like 15 years. I've never seen her pound a table once. Ha!

**Lynn L. Bergeson (LLB):** Hello, and welcome to *All Things Chemical*, a podcast produced by Bergeson & Campbell, P.C. (B&C<sup>®</sup>), a Washington, D.C., law firm focusing on chemical law, business, and litigation matters. I'm Lynn Bergeson.

This week, as employees around the country are returning to their offices and workstations, I was really excited to visit with Larry Sloan, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), located here in the Washington, D.C., area. AIHA may not be well known to many of our listeners, but I think that's about to change. Founded in 1939, AIHA is a not-for-profit organization serving professionals dedicated to the identification, evaluation, control, and confirmation of environmental stressors in or arising from the workplace. Given AIHA's extraordinary institutional expertise in workplace stressors, its role and prominence in getting workers back into a safe and healthful work environment in light of COVID-19, have rocketed its Back to Work Safely initiative -- the subject of our conversation today -- into national prominence.

Larry is a chemical engineer by training and obtained a master's of business administration (MBA) from Northwestern's Kellogg Graduate School of Management. Larry is a well-respected professional in Washington, D.C., chemical circles, with a distinguished career in trade association management. Prior to becoming CEO of AIHA in 2016, Larry was CEO of the Society of Chemical Manufacturers and Affiliates (SOCMA), an organization advancing the interests of specialty chemical manufacturers. Before SOCMA, Larry was President of the Adhesive and Sealant Council. Now, here is my conversation with Larry Sloan.

Larry, welcome, and thank you for joining *All Things Chemical*. Before I begin, I'd like to express on behalf of B&C our well wishes to you, your family, and your many employees at AIHA -- and their families -- during this very, very challenging time.

As you and I were just chatting, I've known you for a long time, but for some of our listeners, they may be less familiar with you and your distinguished, *very* distinguished career. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

**Larry D. Sloan (LDS):** Sure, and, Lynn, again, same well wishes to you and your family. And thank you for having me on today's podcast.

I was trained as a chemical engineer, and I worked in the gas and chemical sector. I first started out as a process engineer at Air Products and Chemicals in Allentown, Pennsylvania. I worked there for several years in a variety of capacities. Then I went back to earn my MBA. That took me out to Chicago. I worked at a company called Nalco Chemicals upon graduating from Kellogg, which is part of Northwestern. At Nalco Chemicals, I worked in, again, a variety of capacities, but more on the business side of things. In marketing. I worked for a while at their manufacturing plant. Then I ultimately ended up in sales. The sales capacity at Nalco took me down to Florida, and I found that that type of a position just wasn't suited to my background and my skills that I had cultivated over the years.

Long story short, I made a pivot and moved back to the mid-Atlantic region in the mid-90s. I worked for my father's company. My father was a manufacturers rep, and the company represented a couple dozen companies that made wastewater treatment systems. I was a manufacturers rep for about six years, and I sold wastewater treatment systems to both industry as well as to large municipalities. My experience in water treatment started actually at Air Products, and then it filtered through my time at Nalco, and then with my father's company.

But by the end of the '90s, I felt that the future of being a manufacturers rep was a little bit questionable in terms of economic viability, and I was tired of being a road warrior, and I wanted to be part of a team. So I spoke to a very dear friend of mine from college who was running a trade association at that time. She said to me, "Why don't you consider looking at a chemical trade association? Because based on all of your experience, it really would be a very good fit." That's where I started my foray in the nonprofit sector, working for a small chemical trade association called the Adhesive and Sealant Council. I worked there for nine years, and I actually got my first CEO job while at Adhesive and Sealant Council, and then from there, I moved to SOCMA for seven years, and then on to AIHA just about three and a half years ago. So here I am.

**LLB:** Along the way, you and I befriended one another. I have long been an admirer of your skill, your intellect, and your ability to bring people together, Larry. Your background really makes you just exceptionally well suited to be the CEO of AIHA. Now, I've been a lawyer in the chemical space for a long time, so I have nothing but admiration for the critical role the association plays in identifying, educating, and protecting against occupational and environmental hazards. AIHA's science professionals are absolutely top in their field and hugely respected. But I know AIHA may not resonate with the American public as much as it does with industrial and occupational health professionals and scientists. I know it was founded in 1939, so it's been around a long time and it's respected throughout the world. But tell us a little bit about the mission, and the goal, and the purpose of AIHA.

**LDS:** Sure. AIHA is, unfortunately, a very well-kept secret, and I had never heard about -- I never heard about AIHA. I never heard about the term industrial hygiene in all the years that I was in the chemical space, from even when I was at Air Products as a process engineer. I never heard the term industrial hygiene. It just wasn't a thing. I'm sure Air Products had industrial hygienists at that time. It is a well-kept secret, but I'll tell you that over the years, I think that we have taken strides to better publicize what it is that we do. We'll talk about that in a little bit.

AIHA, again, has been around since 1939, and we have just about 50 employees and 8,000-plus members, mostly here in the United States. The membership is a mix of consultants, professionals that are employed by corporations such as Sherwin Williams; Procter & Gamble; federal, state, and local government officials, for example, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has offices across the country; and of course, academia. We also have 65 or so local sections around the country and a few up in Canada. We have 25 student local sections. Although of these thousands of members that are part of the local section network, I would say probably a good half of them are also members of AIHA national, but it is not a requirement.

The mission of AIHA is to empower those who apply scientific knowledge to protect all workers from occupational hazards. Our vision, of course very aspirational, is a world where all workers are healthy and safe. Now, beyond the core [Section] 501(c)(6) [of the Internal Revenue Code] membership and all the associated programs and services that we provide those 8,000-plus members, we also manage three LLCs. One of them is a lab accreditation program. Another is a proficiency analytical testing program for laboratories. We also have two foundations. One is the Education Foundation that awards scholarships to college students, both undergraduate and graduate. And there's another one that develops emergency response planning guidelines for community exposure to chemicals that could result from, say, a chemical plant accident. I think you can see, it's a rather complex enterprise with a lot of moving pieces.

**LLB:** It is indeed. It is indeed. As we're recording this podcast, Larry, at the end of May, and as workers around the country are returning to their workstations and their offices and their factory locations, I would think the role you play in making the workplace a safe and healthful environment is in extremely high demand. In that regard, it seems like I can't get on the Internet these days without seeing a lot about AIHA's Back to Work Safely program. Can you tell us a little bit about what that initiative is and how it is benefiting employers and employees around the country in returning to workstations everywhere?

**LDS:** Absolutely, and I'm pleased to see that you are *seeing* this Back to Work Safely campaign.

**LLB:** I am! All over social media.

**LDS:** Very good. Very good. It's also been picked up by several mainstream media outlets, so we are making a difference, as they say. I would say a little over a month ago, one of our Past Presidents, Allan K. Fleeger, who, of course, was one of the founding members of the Product Stewardship Society -- he has been very vocal about the lack of guidance from the federal government. He was watching *Fox News* one night, and he noticed that the President, Trump, had some sort of a back to work, reopening the U.S. economy task force that was in place that was going to start to provide some guidance to the economy, to businesses of all sizes. We decided that AIHA needed to play a role in providing clear, common-sense guidance to businesses. We decided we would focus on small businesses, because the larger companies have in-house resources and the reach that the smaller folks

don't. We looked at the various industry sectors that were outlined in President Trump's task force, and we literally looked at the list and thought, "Let's start with just a few and develop some practical guidance to the small businesses."

We started out with restaurants, retail, general office buildings, and hair and nail salons. In speaking with the leadership of the AIHA Board, who quickly approved the pursuit of this project, we decided that we would construct these documents from the perspective of the employer, the employee, and then the general public that might frequent the establishment, for example, a restaurant or a retail shop. We have quickly garnered quite a bit of attention in the media beyond the occupational health safety spectrum, to explain to, again, small businesses, these are some commonsense approaches on things that need to be undertaken to win back the trust, if you will, and the respect of your clients.

**LLB:** I looked at the notices on AIHA's website, and the documents are very, very well done. I would expect no less, because I have such great respect for AIHA professionals as scientists and occupational safety and health experts, but really, it's exceedingly well done.

Tell me, Mark Cuban, celebrity entrepreneur, investor, clearly sports enthusiast, and part-time actor. As a *Billions* aficionado, I've seen Mark Cuban make a number of cameo appearances on that program. I know he has helped launch the Back to Work Safely program, but what is the connection between AIHA and Mr. Cuban?

**LDS:** Mr. Cuban was actually the catalyst for this effort.

**LLB:** No kidding!

**LDS:** Yes. He actually had been recruited, apparently by the Presidential Administration, to join this task force. So as Allan Fleeger was watching this newscast and learning about the task force, he noticed that Mr. Cuban was one of the members. Somehow -- and we don't really understand exactly how this played out -- but Allan e-mailed Mr. Cuban, and Mr. Cuban responded, which is pretty amazing.

**LLB:** That is amazing.

**LDS:** We don't know whether it was Mr. Cuban himself. Was it one of his assistants, who was monitoring his e-mail account? But regardless, the message back to Allan and us was, "I challenge you, AIHA, to take the lead. Step up your game and start developing these guidance documents." I think that the role of Mr. Cuban was the catalyst to get us to quickly snap into action. And we formed a task force of around a dozen members, both mid-career and late career professionals, including former OSHA head John Henshaw. We quickly started to author these first few documents, and it has ballooned from there. On the website, as we speak, I think there are about 15, and we have another three or four in the pipeline. Since we put all these documents up online and started to up our public relations campaign and get the word out to mass media coast to coast, Mark has tweeted about AIHA and his website at least twice, and he was interviewed with the *Washington Examiner* newspaper a couple weeks back. It was a video interview, and he actually spelled out AIHA and gave us a shout-out as part of his interview, so that's pretty cool.

**LLB:** It's cool for spreading the word because, again, there is no more important substantive area right now for employers and employees than understanding how to make the workplace safe for a return to work, given the fact that we're still living in the middle of a pandemic. It also helps to know that Mark Cuban and his celebrity will help get the name AIHA out there.

You and I have talked about this, Larry, because I have been an aficionado of AIHA for many, many years. The quality of the work, the guidance, the instruction that the organization provides to industrial and occupational safety and health experts is extraordinary. But I appreciate that industrial hygiene may not resonate with people. What does *industrial hygiene* mean exactly? You and I have chatted off and on about your brand refresh initiative. Can you help our listeners understand what that involves and why you're going that route?

**LDS:** Sure. It's been really the bane of our existence over the last several decades that we really haven't gotten the public recognition as to what it is that industrial hygienists do.

I have been around AIHA now, again, since the fall of 2016. Just prior to my arrival, there was an effort afoot to begin to map out a strategy for how do we better articulate what it is that we do to people who are not like ourselves? These would be people whom we serve: to business C-suite executives; to environmental health, safety management directors and vice presidents, who may not be trained in industrial hygiene; to human resource departments and recruiters, who don't know what industrial hygiene means or how to write a job ad for IH. All the way down to students in junior and senior high school, who might be contemplating a career in [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] (STEM).

Over the last three years, we have literally crafted this campaign that was aimed at figuring out the best approach to not only better articulate the name of the association to the general public, but also the meaning of the profession. We brought in outside assistance. We recruited a firm out of Chicago called 88 Brand Partners. They had worked with ASSP [American Society of Safety Professionals] and also the former ABIH [American Board of Industrial Hygiene], which is now the Board for Global EHS [Environmental Health and Safety] Credentialing. We knew that this firm had an understanding of the occupational health and safety space. By golly, they really snapped into action and helped us to craft a very effective process to identify what is our brand, what are the positioning statements that support the brand, and how are we going to communicate this brand refresh to various audiences? And so, effective June 1, we're going to launch the official brand refresh. We will be pivoting from the name American Industrial Hygiene Association to simply the acronym AIHA. Legally, we'll still be known spelled out, but we'll be known on the street as AIHA with a new tag line. And we're going to be, with the help of *another* firm, a PR agency, starting a very broad-based campaign to communicate to these various audiences that are again, not ourselves, as to what industrial hygiene is.

The pivot there is the switch from the term industrial hygiene to occupational health, because we feel that is better recognized, and it's also being reflected in various academic programs at the university level. You see a lot of programs that are a master's or a bachelors in occupational and environmental health, or simply occupational health. We're trying to be harmonized, if you will, with the trends in academia. We feel that the term *occupational health* resonates a little better and a little more clearly with students who are contemplating a career in STEM. It's all very exciting, and the kickoff will be concurrent with our AIHce 2020 virtual conference.

**LLB:** The convergence of your pivoting to this brand refresh and focus on occupational health and everyone's return-to-work focus these days seems kind of extraordinary. I know you didn't plan that; it certainly resonates. Occupational health definitely resonates, I think, to many more people than a concept of hygiene, which those of us in the profession know all too well, and of course, deeply respect the expertise that AIHA brings to bear on the subject.

But again, this brand refresh and pivoting to occupational health just seems to make an awful lot of sense, and the timing couldn't be more exquisitely timed.

In that regard, Larry, recognizing that -- I'm going to pivot back to a little more of what I do, which is work in the industrial chemical area -- occupational safety and health professionals play just an extraordinarily pivotal role in ensuring a safe and healthful work environment and passage, right around the time you became CEO of AIHA in 2016, of amendments to the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and the identification of workers in the context of that federal law as a, quote, "potentially exposed or susceptible subpopulation," close quote, to my mind, has made worker protection even more important.

Put aside the pandemic, just recognizing that in our field of federal chemical legal and regulatory matters, workers and the role they play as potentially exposed or susceptible subpopulations is hugely important. Has AIHA's engagement in TSCA matters over the last four years, in particular with respect to TSCA implementation, increased? You and I have talked about this. We've met with EPA on a number of occasions. Talk a little bit about that.

**LDS:** I think that AIHA's involvement with EPA, and specifically TSCA, it's definitely increased, but I think that we can do more. I believe that my involvement and engagement with TSCA reform while I was at SOCMA has really helped to drive the awareness within the AIHA membership that we need to have a seat at the table with EPA, just like we do with OSHA and [the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health] (NIOSH).

When you talk about TSCA, it is critical that there be a conversation with respect, again, to occupational health and safety. Sharing information with our members and the broader occupational health and safety community is one of the most important things that we can do here at AIHA. We have ramped up our reporting on the latest developments in TSCA implementation to help our members really understand what's going on with TSCA, because I think that this has, again, not been a topic that's been brought to the forefront of our government relations agenda prior to my arrival. But as a result of this, we need to figure out a way to effectively engage with the policymakers to help protect workers, and we want to make sure that we always keep lines of communication that are open and healthy.

With respect to TSCA, AIHA's focus needs to be on the worker: safeguarding worker health, especially for the sensitive subpopulations, as you know. If a worker gets sick, this, of course, has broader implications for the employer. There are worker comp expenses, there's lost productivity, there's a trickle-down effect to the bottom line of the company, but then on a more personal note, more human note, the economic and social toll that this takes on their families. So AIHA needs to tell the story. It needs to weave into its narrative the fact that TSCA reform, which was a monumental achievement, I think, in chemical legislation --

**LLB:** Indeed, yes.

**LDS:** We were very proud of the final product back in 2016, but now, as the head of AIHA, we need to make sure that the occupational health and safety community understands how and where they plug in. I think that's going to be a challenge for the next several years.

**LLB:** I would agree that your role at both American Adhesives and Sealants and SOCMA makes you extraordinarily well suited to assist EPA, and even federal regulators, in appreciating the important role AIHA plays in both educating and in its certification programs and how it

can benefit both EPA, NIOSH, OSHA, and employers around the country in appreciating how best to implement TSCA and how best to protect workers.

In that regard, one area of AIHA's work, and I think a very important one, relates to training and education. AIHA University, and the various certification programs that you promote through AIHA -- can you tell us a little bit about what's going on there?

**LDS:** Sure. First of all, just the clarification that we at AIHA offer certificates, not certifications. This is, Lynn, one of the many things that I learned when I joined AIHA is the world of credentialing. It's very complicated, because there are certificates, there are certifications, there are registry programs, and probably many other things that I'm not even aware of. But certificates, which is what AIHA offers, are based on completing a defined course and then passing an exam based on that course content. And certification, such as the CIH [Certified industrial hygienist], is broader based and that would not be specifically dependent upon a course.

Again, that would be the purview of our sister organization, BGC [Board for Global Credentialing], which manages and administers the CIH. We provide the education for that, and they provide the actual certification. Now, AIHA University is our brand for all of the education and technical resources that we offer. That includes the face-to-face training, such as our annual conference, AIHce Expo, the learning programs, our webinars, our bookstore, which we call AIHA Press. We have a new e-library subscription, our various guidance documents, and of course, our multiple certificate programs. All of this education that we offer helps industrial hygiene professionals earn those continuing education credits toward their CIH, or whatever other credentials they may maintain.

We currently offer two e-certificate programs. One is called Occupational Exposure Assessment, and that is designed to teach students to develop exposure assessment strategy, data gathering and interpretation, and then using the hierarchy of controls to manage those hazards. It's really designed for more entry-level professionals who are starting out working under the supervision of a more senior professional. It's a four-hour course with an exam.

The second one is the Field Use of Direct Read Instruments, or DRI, as they call it. This is in the process now of being updated to reflect evolving knowledge. It is also a four-hour course, plus an exam. And we've just completed what's called a job task analysis, which will then feed into the exam that's going to support the pursuit of this certificate.

Separately from these two e-certificates, we also offer registry programs, which, to be honest with you, are very much like certificates. We have four of them. One is the Legacy Asbestos Analyst Registry Program. We have a Safety Data Sheet Author Registry. One of our newer ones is the Occupational Health and Safety Management System Auditor Registry. These registry programs are perhaps a step removed from the traditional certificates. You take a variety of courses, you sit for an exam, and then we maintain literally registries of names on our website upon successful completion of the exam.

**LLB:** Just the breadth and diversity of the offerings AIHA has available to the community is extraordinary, Larry. Thank you for going through those.

**LDS:** Sure.

**LLB:** One of the areas that always interests me -- because our client base is, of course, international -- is how AIHA works with the broader international community in sharing

information and to help extend its learnings, which are extensive here in the United States. Is there an international component, or do you liaise with the broader international community on some of these programs?

**LDS:** We do. There is a lot going on in the international space, so allow me to summarize in the interest of time. AIHA is one of 35 member associations of a federation called IOHA [International Occupational Hygiene Association]. There are IOHA board meetings that are held now virtually throughout the year, and there are global initiatives that AIHA and the other members are supporting. We also have a very close relationship, in particular with the British Association called BOHS [British Occupational Hygiene Society], and the Australian association, called AIOH [Australian Institute of Occupational Hygiene]. As a matter of fact, just a couple of days ago, I connected with the new Executive Director of BOHS over in the United Kingdom, and we are talking about ways that we can further enhance our partnership on a variety of matters, including climate change. What is the role of the occupational health professional with respect to climate change?

A very exciting area, as well as the brand refresh. I explained to him what we're going to be launching on June 1, and he got very excited about it. And he said maybe there's opportunities for us to collaborate on the downward facing, if you will, external communications to these audiences.

Now, within the AIHA, we have actually retooled our international priorities over the last couple years. As you may or may not know, we do not have an international affairs department. It's kind of a little piece of me and a little piece of a couple other people. But we don't have an official international affairs department, so it's being done on a piecemeal basis. But we formed an advisory group last year to help build out what our framework should look like. And the first of the two thrusts, if you will, is an altruistic element, helping the emerging economies who need occupational health and safety services and training the most. We offer a microgrant program; every year, we set aside \$20,000-25,000, and we have a competitive grants process in which we open up the portal and we have charities apply for these small grants, and the grants might range from a couple hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars. We have a subcommittee that sits down and reviews all the applications and decides which ones basically adhere to the spirit of the program and how much money each of those charities would receive in the forthcoming year. Then the AIHA Board will review the recommendations and officially approve the disbursements. For 2020, we approved close to \$30,000 in microgrants.

The second element is helping to develop professionals. This is where we decided the world is a big place, and we can't do everything everywhere, so let's just focus our attention on a few specific regions. We decided we would continue our involvement with India, and we would ramp up our involvement in Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, and Puerto Rico, because of their proximity to the United States and the fact that if we develop materials in Spanish for these regions, those materials will have applicability here in the United States as well.

We are fostering close working relationships with the sister organizations in each and every one of those regions. For example, we are offering -- I call it deep discount pricing -- 80 percent off on the selected e-learning e-certificate programs, such as the ones that I just mentioned, as well as a variety of publications. We are also translating specific products into Spanish. We're very excited about how we can give back to our friends down in Latin America, and the receptivity has been very positive.



Then finally, although AIHA is not a standards-developing organization anymore -- we have relegated that responsibility to ASSP. ASSP is then the accredited body that works through [the American National Standards Institute] (ANSI) and feeds up through [the International Organization for Standardization] (ISO). We have representatives who serve on various technical standards committees that are maintained by ASSP. I would say there's probably a good dozen or so committees in which AIHA representation is helping to advance the role of occupational health as these standards are being crafted.

**LLB:** I'm so glad I asked about international, because I had no idea! Larry, you are so diverse in the international community, despite the A in AIHA. That is fabulous.

**LDS:** There's a lot going on. It really is pretty amazing.

**LLB:** There's a lot going on. Speaking of going on, you have a huge event that's coming up also on June 1. You are one very busy boy. That's the AIHce Expo 2020 conference. I know you and your staff have been extraordinarily busy, and you made the decision to go virtual. This transition has occurred utterly seamlessly. Can you talk to us a little bit about what that expo is all about and what you hope to accomplish?

**LDS:** I'll tell you, the decision, Lynn, to transition from the face-to-face down in Atlanta to the all virtual was -- it was an easy decision to make at the end of the day. The challenge was the timing of when we could announce it. We were bound by contractual obligations and not able to make the official announcement until the middle of April. But once we were able to make that announcement officially, publicly to the membership and to the constituents that attend, we snapped into action, and we decided to really figure out a way that we could take lemons and make lemonade out of them. Number one, it is still not too late to register.

**LLB:** Great.

**LDS:** We are in the process of recording most of the sessions, which will then be broadcast during the events. The speakers of those sessions will then be on hand to answer questions after recordings air, and there will be a handful of live sessions as well. But the content was really redone, if you will, over the last couple of months with respect to COVID. A lot of the presentations that had been approved by the conference planning committee had to be retooled because of COVID. We did make some modifications across the board, and there's going to be a very special COVID-19 series of sessions that runs throughout the conference.

There are a total of five concurrent tracks. The programing runs all day Monday through Wednesday, and then we have professional development courses that are pretty much all-day affairs. They will run on June 4, 5, and then the week after. Attendees can earn up to 20 content management hours toward their, again, CIH or other credentials. Anybody who registers for the conference also has access to what is called "on demand." You can actually earn additional hours by listening to recordings through the end of the year. And those points, again, go toward the CIH certification renewal.

We have an opening session that's being broadcast on Monday, June 1, called "Harnessing the Power of Courage." It is recorded, and it is being presented by one of our well-known keynote speakers, René Rodriguez. He's going to talk about something called the Courage Scale, very applicable in these times.

**LLB:** I'll say.

**LDS:** He's also going to be providing the closing session. And that session is entitled "The Neuroscience of Influence." He's going to break down what is neuroscience, and how can we, as IH professionals, utilize it, know when and how to use it? And how do we build our power base? This all kind of figures into AIHA's focus on developing soft skills.

One of the areas that I have personally been developing is something called emotional intelligence, or EQ, emotional quotient. We have developed a series of webinars over the years to help our members better communicate with folks at a variety of levels within one's organization, or as a consultant, because emotional intelligence is every bit as important as IQ.

Finally, I'm very pleased to announce that as of Friday, we had just about 1,800 unique attendees registered.

**LLB:** Wow! Congratulations!

**LDS:** We're absolutely thrilled about this. Yes, it's pretty amazing. It has surpassed our expectations. Hopefully, there'll be some additional folks that register this week. If you want to register, you simply go to <https://www.aihceexpo.org>.

**LLB:** Excellent! Kudos to you and your incredible staff, Larry, for pulling that off. What a remarkable transformation, and fabulous attendance! That's incredible.

**LDS:** Yes, very exciting.

**LLB:** I would be remiss if I didn't ask about an organization near and dear to me, and that's the Product Stewardship Society. Can you tell us a little bit about it and its relationship with AIHA?

**LDS:** The Product Stewardship Society is an allied group within AIHA. It is not a separate 501(c)(6), but it is a group within the umbrella of the association.

Product stewardship really is based on the core concept of risk assessment, which we know is a core function of both industrial hygiene and product stewardship. We feel that the product stewardship profession today looks similar to what the industrial hygiene profession looked like many, many decades ago. We know that AIHA members have played a role in product stewardship for many years, and as you know, we have maintained our AIHA Stewardship and Sustainability Committee. It's been one of our more active and engaged volunteer groups.

In response to this, about ten years ago, we were seeing a growing number of professionals, and not just AIHA members, who were moving into the realm of product stewardship. We saw that there was a lack of a professional home and that there were limited resources for these professionals. That's what begat the creation of the Product Stewardship Society. We felt that the Product Stewardship Society should be based on education and professional development, not so much on advocacy, because there are enough trade associations, as you're well aware, that focus on the advocacy of, say, the chemical space, but rather how do we further develop individuals as they pursue their interests in the realm of product stewardship? It became quite clear to us that an organization that serves the needs of product stewardship professionals was needed to help move the profession forward, so the Society was formed in 2012.

Now, eight years later, the Society has established a rather robust community of product stewards. We've developed a full suite of resources to help folks further their careers, including the Product Stewardship Conference itself -- which we're calling now PSX -- and also through the most recent collaboration with the Board for Global EHS Credentialing, which is going to be launching the new Certified Professional Product Steward credential.

If anybody wants to learn more about the Society, they can visit the website at [productstewards.org](http://productstewards.org) for more information. Then last but not least, as you know, the Society does have its annual conference, which right now is being scheduled for September 15 to 17 in Houston. It is planned to be on site as we speak, but we will be making regular announcements about this as we look at the landscape and the decision to pivot to a virtual format like with AIHCe.

**LLB:** That was an excellent overview of the Product Stewardship Society. As its current President, I wanted to thank you, Larry, for your absolutely unqualified support, promotion, and leadership of the Product Stewardship Society, an organization that I think has a very, very important role. AIHA's support of it is critical and commendable.

Let me ask you one final question before I suggest that you let listeners know how they can find out more about AIHA, and that is, as CEO, where do you see AIHA headed over the next several years in light of the absolutely critical role for workplace safety during this time of pandemic?

**LDS:** In a way, this horrific pandemic has shed light, I think, on the importance of occupational health, certainly as an area of concern for workers worldwide, but just more broadly, as a profession that was previously hidden from the mainstream media. Look how many times you hear the terms "N95" or "PPE." Every time you turn on the news, you read a newspaper. It's commonplace vernacular these days, which is pretty amazing.

AIHA, which was already making plans to launch its brand refresh campaign, got a jumpstart by leveraging COVID-19, helping the general public understand what it is that we do, the role that we play, and also to help educate everyday folks on a variety of topics. For example, PPE, what's the difference between different types of respirators and a mask? Most people conflate the two. They don't understand that there is a difference between a mask and a respirator. What are the needs for proper disinfection and cleaning in the workplace? What is the importance of taking precautionary steps when you reopen a closed building?

We've been launching a variety of outreach efforts based on these types of topics with respect to COVID-19, but then in the second half of the year, we're going to begin the originally planned, if you will, targeted outreach campaigns, starting with business C-suite executives, as well as students and educators, to help, again, broaden an understanding as to what occupational health is all about. Longer term, I feel very optimistic that the value that the occupational health professional will bring to society is going to be a little more top of mind, and I think a more recognizable career option for students who do want to pursue a rewarding and financially lucrative profession. I think that we have a really good message for millennials and the Gen Z students, because when you think about it, helping to keep people healthy at work, what could be more altruistic than that?

**LLB:** Absolutely. Larry, you are an eloquent spokesperson for AIHA, and you've certainly helped me, and I hope our listeners, in understanding the incredibly crucial role AIHA plays in

providing and helping employers and others achieve a safe and healthful workplace. How might anyone get additional information on your organization?

**LDS:** Again, thank you very much for having me on today, and I am very passionate about the mission of AIHA, and I think that does come through. If you want more information about AIHA, the best place is to go to our website, AIHA.org.

We recently redesigned it, so it should be easier to navigate. We do have a special coronavirus COVID-19 web page that contains a variety of resources, including a link to the separate web page, BackToWorkSafely.org, which contains those guidance documents that we talked about at the top of the interview. I encourage folks to log on and learn.

**LLB:** Larry, all my best on the brand refresh and on AIHCe Expo 2020, fast approaching. Your hard work is extraordinary, and I want to thank you for joining us today. You are an excellent guest, and I think our listeners have learned a lot more about the incredibly important role AIHA plays in society today. Thank you.

**LDS:** Thank you, Lynn. And hopefully everybody who's listening is in good health. Thank you.

**LLB:** Thanks again to Larry Sloan for sitting down with me today to discuss AIHA's Back to Work Safely initiative and making the return to work spaces across the country safe and less stressful. As always, check out our website at [www.lawBC.com](http://www.lawBC.com), where you will find much more information on similar topics and find out more about what our firm offers.

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