



John Gaetano, CHFM, CHC **2022 Candidate for Advisory Board Region 1 Representative**

Bio

Throughout the last 27 years John has worked in Healthcare Facilities Management. John spent 15 years at Faxton- St. Luke’s (now known as the Mohawk Valley Health System) in Utica, NY as the Director of Facilities with experience in managing Engineering & Grounds, Construction, Environmental Services, Security, and the Energy Center & Co-Gen Plant. John helped his previous hospital implement a Co-Generation Plant that opened in 2009, has extensive experience in Legionella Remediation, and employee relations experience including the merging of the Faxton Hospital and St. Luke’s Hospital Facilities Departments together.

Seven years ago John left Faxton-St. Luke’s to pursue an opportunity with Cayuga Medical Center in Ithaca, as the Director of Facilities Management with responsibilities in Facilities and Safety & Security. John has since added Environmental Services, Hazmat, Emergency Preparedness, and Nutrition & Dining to his oversight, and is the Assistant Vice President of Facilities and Support Services at Cayuga Medical Center.

John graduated from Mohawk Valley Community College with an AAS in Civil Engineering Technology and a BS from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in association with Syracuse University. Directly after college, John worked for two private construction firms as an Estimator and Project Manager. He worked as an Assistant Director of Facilities for Mohawk Valley Community College for 9 years before going into the healthcare field.

John is a CHFM “Certified Healthcare Facility Manager” certification in 2008, and received his CHC “Certified Healthcare Constructor” certification in 2018.

John has been an ASHE member for over 20 years and received the Region 1 Emerging Leader award in 2013. He is currently President of the Central New York Society of Healthcare Engineers, Inc. chapter. He has held this position since 2012, and was President Elect for several years prior. He has participated in every ASHE Annual Conference since 2008 including the Chapter Leadership Sessions. He is also the chapter’s Advocacy liaison, and has been an NFPA member for many years. John has chaired for the New York State Annual Healthcare Facilities Conference for the past 8 years, making it the largest Facilities Healthcare gathering in NYS.

Candidate Questionnaire

1. As the health care landscape continues to change, what are some of the common challenges facing the entire ASHE membership?

Budget, staffing, and succession planning. In healthcare, if there was an unlimited amount of capital funding, Facility Managers, Architects, and Engineers would make hospitals bullet proof. Managers understand what needs to be done for healthcare facilities to help them meet new code requirements, while utilizing equipment that may have been put in place prior to the code

changes. Especially in areas where temperature, humidity, Hepa filtration, and work place violence initiatives are required to prevent infection & increase safety for all.

Growing your own – Finding front line staff with years of experience to come work for the healthcare market is challenging. The paradigm is shifting to finding employees that enjoy working in healthcare and growing their skills in both management and frontline staff membership. Cost efficient ASHE provided training can help ease the learning curve and provide motivation to further their careers. Increased recognized ASHE/AHA Specialized Certifications for the trades would help promote this and provide a progressive skill path ladder for employees in the trades that could validate their worth within healthcare human resources departments.

2. What can ASHE do to ensure that the needs of all members are being met?

ASHE has been a significant resource through the past few years during COVID 19. The guidance provided was invaluable for Healthcare Facilities. The ASHE List Serve has helped all healthcare professionals form a brotherhood/sisterhood of information sharing and peer support. This is one of the greatest initiatives ASHE has put forth to help ASHE members find solutions and advice from peers and should continue.

Optimizing the Physical Environment lends itself to a wide variety of expertise needed from several career paths. During these challenging times I believe ASHE should place more emphasis on increasing membership from Emergency Preparedness and Safety professionals. Education tracks for Safety & Emergency Preparedness professionals should run parallel to code, design, sustainability, at the ASHE PDC & ASHE Annual. Providing a full advertised program would enhance justification for sending these professionals to conference and being members. This is currently done at the annual NYS Conference and has been well received.

ASHE needs to have strategic advisors that can adapt to the changing needs of healthcare.

3. The Advisory Board sets the vision and strategic direction for the organization. What specific initiatives would you like to accomplish to help advance the ASHE strategic plan?

Focus on objectives to encourage more healthcare employees to attend the annual and network with each other. Some ideas may include a conference discount for multiple attendees from the same hospital. Review our membership breakdown by racial ethnicity. There may exist a pool of folks that can be tapped into and trained that would welcome a successful healthcare facilities career. A program needs to be developed that healthcare institutions can share to promote career development. Similar to an apprentice program / BOCES.

Structure the Regional meetings at the ASHE Annual to be more focused on the member's regional issues. This is a perfect time that members from chapters around the region that normally do not have to opportunity to associate and share experiences to become closer. The format should be informally structured so members are relaxed and look forward to participating in front of a smaller group in the regional meeting.

ASHE & AHA needs to lobby for more C-Suite involvement. The C-Suite needs to recognize how ASHE is optimizing the healthcare care facilities environment. A quarterly newsletter/ bulletin targeted toward the C-Suite lobbying identifying reasons for increased membership within their health system with some brief tips on what ASHE is focusing on would likely encourage increased participation in ASHE events.

4. What professional or personal experiences have helped prepare you to serve as an ASHE leader?

I have been working in the facilities management field as a Director / Administrator for over 31 years, with 22 of those years in a hospital environment. I have been a member for ASHE and the NFPA for most of those years. I have served as CNYSHE Chapter President for the past 10 years helping the chapter achieve Platinum Level several consecutive years during my tenure. I have attended every ASHE Annual Conference since 2008. I have achieved certifications in both CHFM and CHC.

I have participated on the ASHE Faculty team. On the team I helped develop the ASHE Legionella Training Workshop and written a few short advocacy articles.

I continue to chair the NYS Healthcare Facilities Conference. The conference began back in 2015 and has grown in attendance very year. Administrating this successful conference and working with the board consisting of five NYS Chapter presidents, has given me the experience to strategically plan and lead a group of individuals dedicated to helping improve the physical development. I participate well in group settings and I am always willing to listen to the positions of others.

In my current role as Assistant Vice President I participate in extended Senior leadership meetings and understand from both sides how to navigate a very complex, ever changing healthcare environment.