

# THE AMERICAN INTERSOCIETY ACADEMY FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SANITARIANS, INC.<sup>1</sup>

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In discussing the newly formed American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians, Incorporated, it is relevant to review briefly some of the background of events that have led to its creation.

During the past twenty years, in this country, there has been a rather steady and increasingly effective effort directed toward improving the educational, performance, and professional standards of public health sanitarians. These efforts have taken direction in several ways. State and local associations have established voluntary certification plans. Twenty-eight states now have acts for legal registration with the California Act of 1945 leading the way. The sanitarian's place as a member of the public health team was more firmly recognized by the American Public Health Association when in 1956 a report was published and given wide distribution entitled, "Educational and Other Qualifications of Public Health Sanitarians (3)." About 1960, within the personnel structure of the U. S. Public Health Service, the Sanitarian category was re-evaluated and restricted to those persons recognized as professional sanitarians. Such action improved the status of the Sanitarian in the Public Health Service and nationally.

In the area of graduate education, many sanitarians qualified at the baccalaureate level, have taken advantage of the scholarship and stipend plan offered through the facilities of Title I of the Health Amendments Act of 1956 (5) and have earned a master's or higher degree in one of the several public health specialities, and particularly in environmental health.

Brief as this summary has been, it should serve to make the point that the past twenty years have witnessed noteworthy progress toward the enhancement of the sanitarian as a professional worker in the health sciences field.

## CREATION OF INTERSOCIETY ACADEMY

The American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians was formally created on October 9, 1964 and here again there is some additional background and detail that is pertinent to its origin. Basically, the Academy stems from the out-growth of

two proposals. The first of these dates to October, 1956, at which time a voluntary group was formed to become known as the Sanitarian's Joint Council. This Council as organized consists of appointed representatives from three associations: the American Public Health Association through its Engineering and Sanitation Section; the International Association of Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians, Inc.; and the National Association of Sanitarians, Inc.

The objectives and purposes of the Council, agreed upon at the time of the formation were, and continue to be, as follows: "To consider ways and means of solving important problems of mutual interest to sanitarians' organizations which need unified action and which may be brought to the Council by any of its members" (4). From this general statement of objectives and purposes other more specific ones were set forth. However, for purposes of this paper, the one objective that is directly pertinent is one which called upon the Council "to develop a Sanitarians' Specialty Board". In essence, the present Intersociety Academy is an outgrowth and a culmination of this stated objective since the present Academy and the Specialty Board are one and the same.

The second proposal leading to its creation had its origin, to a considerable degree at least, within the Executive Board of this International Association, dating back to the period 1959-1960. Members of the Executive Board at that time were entirely in accord with the speciality board concept and wanted to launch the plan as expeditiously as possible. In 1959-1960 there was no positive assurance that such an organization would be created and the Executive Board was so strongly favorable to it that, should it be found to fail in other quarters, this Association would have been willing to underwrite its initial cost and assume administrative responsibility. It is therefore entirely fair to state that the early endorsement of this concept by IAMFES served to move the Council to prompt action and hasten agreement on the part of the other two sponsoring associations.

This background material and a review of the evolutionary steps leading to the creation of the Intersociety Academy should serve to illustrate the point that the proposal and the plan have been under consideration for a period of about five years with an ample amount of exploration, preparation and thought given to its implementation. This is one of

<sup>1</sup>Presented at 52nd Annual Meeting of INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MILK, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITARIANS, INC. at Hartford, Conn., September 13-16, 1965.

several concrete accomplishments of the Sanitarian's Joint Council each of which has enhanced the sanitarian's professional status and image.

#### ORGANIZATION PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE ACADEMY

In view of the fact that the Academy is the creation of the Sanitarian's Joint Council and that each Council member has played an important role in getting it launched, the Board of Directors at this point in its organization consists of the same persons who were Council members on October 9, 1964, plus three at-large members. Thus the Board of Directors consists of a total of twelve persons. A Constitution and Bylaws have been drawn and the Academy will be incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the State of Indiana.

We come next then to the purposes of the Academy. There seems no better way to delineate them than to quote directly from the Constitution (2). The nature of the business of the Corporation and the objectives, purposes and the functions to be promoted and carried on by it are as follows:

1. To improve the practice, elevate the standards, and advance the professional functions and ethical standards of practice of the sanitarian in the various fields of environmental health.

2. To grant and issue to qualified sanitarians certificates indicating special knowledge, competence and proficiency in various fields of environmental health. The fields in which certificates as a Diplomate of the American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians may be granted are Environmental Sanitation (general), Milk and Food Sanitation, Vector and Solid Waste Control, Radiological Health, Air Pollution Control, Industrial Hygiene, Institutional Sanitation, Water Supply and Waste Disposal, Housing Hygiene and Environmental Health Administration and such other defined comprehensive fields as may be determined by two-thirds vote of the Board.

3. To receive and act upon applications for such certificates of special knowledge in environmental health for sanitarians; to establish, maintain and from time to time, alter and amend standards and qualifications for the granting or issuance of, and the retention of such certificates; to determine by examination, investigation or otherwise, the fitness of applicants for, and the holders of, such certificates; to develop application forms and diplomas of certification; to prepare, provide and conduct examinations, or to contract for the same, for the purpose of, or in connection with, a determination of fitness and to determine the results of any such examinations; to arrange for and conduct investigations as may be deemed necessary or desirable for, or in connection

with, carrying out any of the above acts; and to collect and receive from each such applicant or examinee, such fees for application, examination, investigation and determination of fitness as may, from time to time, be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Bylaws of the Corporation.

4. To purchase, rent, hire or otherwise acquire and to provide, erect, make, maintain, establish and operate offices and other facilities, and all necessary or convenient equipment for and accessories to any or all thereof; to engage and employ such assistance as may be deemed necessary or desirable in connection with any of such purposes or objects, and to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered to the Corporation.

5. To keep and maintain a register of holders of certificates granted by the Corporation, such to be known as the Roster of the American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians, Inc.

6. To furnish to the public or to interested organizations lists of sanitarians having special knowledge in environmental health, as evidenced by certificates granted by the Corporation.

Now to recapitulate what has been quoted directly from the Constitution, let it be said that any sanitarian achieving the distinction of being elected a diplomate will be a person of outstanding professional qualifications and whose proficiency and competency in the field of environmental health has been amply and ably demonstrated. While registration within the framework of the registration laws of the several states is in itself a noteworthy accomplishment, certification by the Board exceeds that of registration and will establish a cadre of persons who have been tested and examined by their peers and found qualified as distinguished and outstanding practitioners.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR DIPLOMATE AND MEMBERSHIP IN THE INTERSOCIETY

What then are the qualifications for a sanitarian to become a Diplomate in the American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians. Here reference must be made to the Bylaws of the Board (1) where these stipulations are set forth under General Requirements:

1. The applicant shall be of good moral character and of high ethical and professional standing.

2. The applicant must be a graduate with a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university with not less than 30 semester credit hours in the physical and biological sciences. In addition, the applicant must possess a master's or higher degree in public health, sanitary science, environmental health, or scientific specialization bearing upon the sub-speciality of a sanitarian for which certification is authorized by the Board.

3. The applicant by his declaration in performance must accept this concept of the sanitarian: He is a guardian of the sanitary and hygienic quality of our food, our water, our air, our shelter, the environs of our neighborhood, and our workplaces. His resources are knowledge of the biological and physical sciences and their manifestations in the environment. By his observations and tests of these phenomena, he initiates action to protect the community from disabilities and promotes its well being. His skill is observation and judgment. Through interpretation of his analysis he mobilizes his professional colleagues and fellow citizens, to correct and to create a physical environment which gives life a better and more healthful quality.

4. The applicant must be a legally registered sanitarian if residing in a state having a registration law for professional sanitarians. If registered in such state but subsequently residing where there is no registration law, the Board shall consider the applicant to be legally registered as a sanitarian. If the applicant is not legally registered because there is no registration law in his state of residence, he must meet, to the satisfaction of the Board, the criteria specified in the "Model Act for Registration of Sanitarians", as adopted by the Sanitarian's Joint Council, June, 1960.

5. Special Requirements. The applicant must have had at least nine (9) years of acceptable experience in one or more of the various fields of environmental health following completion of all requirements for the undergraduate degree. Acceptable experience shall include at least seven (7) years of responsible charge of work. Responsible charge of work is defined as responsibility for administration, management, supervision, research or teaching in one or more environmental health fields. Time spent in acquiring undergraduate and graduate degrees is not creditable as acceptable experience.

In addition to these general qualifications, there are other specifications for those persons who would be known as Founders. For certification as a Diplomat and as a Founder, the following conditions must be met:

Professional sanitarians who have at least twelve (12) years of professional experience, five (5) of which have been in responsible charge of work, who meet all other eligibility requirements for examination and who have achieved a high standing in the field of environmental health, may be excused from one or more of the examinations, provided application for certification with examination is made to the Board on the prescribed form on or before — (Date not yet established). Such applicant shall, to the satisfaction of the Board provide proper documented evidence of his professional achievement and recognition. The

Board may also waive for such applicants who apply as Founders, the requirement for the graduate degree, provided that the applicant has at least 40 semester or equivalent hours in the physical and biological sciences and has a minimum of three (3) additional years of experience in responsible charge of work. Fees for candidates for examination and for Founders with or without examination shall be the same. A fee of \$25.00 must be paid to the Board within 30 days from the date of notification of acceptance by the Board of the applicant for certification as a Founder. All sanitarians achieving certification as a Founder shall be so identified in the Roster.

#### MEMBERSHIP POTENTIAL.

Having explained the requirements for election to the Academy as a Diplomat, a question which logically follows is that of potential membership. Here, of course, one moves into a somewhat nebulous area. About all that can be done, with any certainty, is to draw upon available sanitarian man power data and make some empirical predictions.

Many of you will recall that the Office of Resource Development, Division of Public Health Methods of the U. S. Public Health Service issued a "Health Man Power Source Book", Section 16, on Sanitarians in 1963 (6). This represented the first national comprehensive manpower survey for this category ever completed. This publication is quite replete with interesting statistics on the sanitarian, his training and his functions. However, only salient features need be mentioned now as they relate to potential membership.

The manpower study in question revealed that there were 7,263 persons listing themselves as sanitarians. Of this number, 4,583 or approximately 63% held a college degree. So it can be said there is a raw potential of 4,583 persons who might be eligible. But of course, the use of this raw figure is not too realistic since many limitations and other unknown circumstances may preclude certification. On the other hand, from the raw potential of 4,583, some 780 or about 17% hold a master's or higher degree. It is from these ranks that the Board will undoubtedly derive a large proportion of its diplomates. Time, of course, will tell how many will become diplomates in one, two or five years, but it is estimated that with the rather steady upswing in graduate education and better professional preparation, a satisfactory level of membership can be realized and maintained.

#### THE VALUE OF THE ACADEMY

As has already been pointed out, the Academy will serve to recognize capable, outstanding and well

qualified sanitarians. The Academy envisions a place of distinction for those who earn and merit this honor. This in itself is a highly desirable goal for many whose professional record is distinguished in the promotion of the public health and in the specialized area of environmental health.

The attainment of the diplomate status should also prove of good purpose when new positions open, when promotions are made and when employers seek to fill vacancies with men of proven capacity and ability.

In addition, Diplomates in the Intersociety should be and unquestionably will be competent to make contributions toward sound administrative decisions, more effective academic and training programs and form an authoritative voice among law and policy makers when modern concepts of public health and environmental health require analysis, promotion and support. These, perhaps, are things for the future but it would be quite futile to build a roster of sanitarian diplomates who would feel no further obligation to their profession or to society than the earning of the distinction of diplomate solely as an end in itself. The present Board of Directors know that there are constant challenges which must be faced and that the Academy through its members should be a strong force in meeting these challenges.

#### OPERATIONS CALENDAR

In conclusion, something should be said about an operations calendar. Already a considerable amount of the preliminary preparation has been completed. Papers of incorporation will be filed within the next thirty days. A sub-committee is already developing an appropriate application form. Preliminary arrangements are now under discussion for the prepar-

ation and holding of certification examinations. Financial backing through loans totaling \$3000 from the three sponsors has been satisfactorily arranged. Publicity and news releases will be forthcoming shortly. A reasonable amount of direct mail promotion will be done to more fully explain the program. As can be readily seen, the launching of this organization as a going concern has required time but things are moving. And it is the earnest hope of the Board of Directors that every professional sanitarian will strive for the honor of being a diplomate; and further, that the members of this Association will give wholehearted support to it and be well represented at all times on the roster of the American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians, Incorporated.

#### REFERENCES

1. American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians. Bylaws of the Board, Article VI, Certification of Sanitarians, Section 3, sub-sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 4a and Section 6. By the Board, 1965.
2. American Intersociety Academy for the Certification of Sanitarians. Constitution, Article III, Sections a, b, c, d, e, and f. By the Board, 1965.
3. American Public Health Association. Education and Other Qualifications of Public Health Sanitarians. *Am. J. Pub. Health*, 46:9, Sept., 1956.
4. Sanitarian's Joint Council. Organization of Sanitarian's Joint Council, Mimeographed by the Council, Nov. 14, 1956.
5. U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Public Health Service, Bureau of State Services. Public Health Traineeships for Professional Health Personnel. One page bulletin issued by the Agency, n.d.
6. U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Public Health Service, Division of Public Health Methods, Office of Resource Development. Health Manpower Source Book, Section 16, Publication 263, 1963.

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### FDA DEDICATES HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

The Food and Drug Administration marked a milestone in its history when its new Washington, D. C. headquarters building was officially dedicated on Tuesday, November 23, 1965. The building constitutes an initial effort to bring together in one central location FDA's scattered Washington offices.

Originally a small bureau of the Department of Agriculture the agency has grown steadily over the span of half a century to become an important and distinct consumer protection arm of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. FDA has district headquarters in eighteen major cities across the country.

The total cost of the new building is \$13 million and ap-

proximately two-thirds will be occupied by scientific activities and one-third by administrative offices. Predominately devoted to scientific research on methods and techniques for inspecting, testing and evaluating the production and consumer use of foods, drugs, cosmetics and therapeutic devices, the new building houses \$6.5 million in scientific equipment and furnishings.

The dedication followed a one-day symposium on November 22 on the Safety of Food and Drugs attended by members of various national technical and professional organizations. President Fred E. Uetz was the IAMFES representative at the symposium and dedication.