

May Section Spotlight Member – Michael Stephens



We are pleased to introduce Michael Stephens - AWWA NJ May's Spotlight Member! Congratulations Mike. Mike is a Superintendent at Aqua New Jersey. He holds NJ T-4, W-4, C-4, N-3 and S-2 Operator Licenses. He has been a member of AWWA since 1991. Mike will tell you that his career started in the eleventh grade at Lansdown-Alden High School, Lansdown PA. His chemistry and environmental science teachers encouraged him to pursue science which was one of his strengths. So, he followed the environmental science path into the U.S. Air Force by becoming an Environmental Support Specialist (E-5 Staff Sergeant) water and wastewater operations/maintenance. He received an honorable discharge after 7 years of service. Mike has also worked for the U.S. Department of Defense, the City of Camden NJ, United Water Co. and currently Aqua New Jersey over the last 31 years.

Mike has been active in our Section and working with operators. He's been part of the Three Day Operator Review class that is held in September of each year at Rutgers University Office of Continuing Professional Education and he has spoken at the Conference on a number of occasions. Mike has been an instructor responsible for teaching the introduction to Water and/or Wastewater, Advanced Water Treatment Part 1 & 2, and Advanced Wastewater Collections Systems classes over the last ten years for Rowan at Gloucester County College, Gloucester Vo-Tech, and Camden County Vo-Tech.

Mike has been active in a number of committees – The Licensed Operator Committee, the Education Committee and he is part of the NJ Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force – Water Wastewater Sector Security Working Group.

Mike was asked questions about his enthusiasm for the field of water and his AWWA NJ Section involvement. Here are his replies:

Why did you decide to go into the field of water? My parents always moved me to do my absolute best in life no matter what career path I would choose. In high school my teachers encouraged me to select a career that brings out my joy and I wanted something that I could share with others.

How did you become a volunteer for AWWA? What motivates you to be active in the Section? I want to always help out where and when I can. I found that I could do that at AWWA NJ.

Hobbies and outside interests? I appreciate being with family, friend and coworkers, eating, enjoying a good meal. I also enjoy watching football and basketball even though I can't play anymore. My hobby is enjoying everything about two channel stereo systems and the music it recreates for the listener.

What legacy would you like to leave behind? It appears that I will more than likely retire in about 5 or 6 years. So, I would hope that I have imparted the joy/zeal for protecting the environment, our customer/communities and teaching operations/maintenance on everyone I have met.