

Lessons Learned

by Tammy Miser

Being Active

What to expect

Going to the National COSH conference I had some preconceived ideas but wasn't quite sure what to expect. I assumed it would be semi formal, they would have all the answers, and I wouldn't quit understand half of what they said. All of which was fine because in my own little world; I have no need to be nervous. Well everyone knows what happens when one assumes! The COSHiens were incredibly inviting and laid back. Everyone freely offered information and ideas, it was very enlightening.

What it's about

I am sure there is much more to it however from what I could tell of the inner works; is that until recently they have all been connected with the COSH Network, which now is trying to evolve into the National COSH Network. Each individual facility is non-profit and gains their funding by grants and memberships; which can incorporate unions, and faith based organizations. Each of the regional originations have a different main focus. Most of this is because of the localized needs. Some of the interesting focuses were: immigrant, youth, injured, ill, death. COSH tries to tackle these issues with training, awareness and advocacy for Health and safety.

My thoughts

There is a great deal of information and recourses available and once they have risen past their growing pains they will be a force to reckon with, not to say that are not now each have preformed a great deal in their region. As it stands now so many other organizations have either dismantled or lost funding for this struggle of lost workers and The National COSH are willing to step forward and attack this crisis head on. If you have been out there you know this is no easy task. COSH is defiantly deserving of our respect and support. They have been posted on our recourses for some time now and you can check them out in your area at:

[ARCOSH](#) Arkansas Coalition on Safety and Health
[CACOSH](#) Chicago Area Committee on Occupational Safety and Health
[CNYCOSH](#) Central New York Committee on Occupational Safety and Health
[ConnectiCOSH](#) Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health
[GCOSH](#) Georgia Committee for Occupational Safety and Health
[Houston COSH](#) Houston Initiative for Worker Safety
[MassCOSH](#) Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
[National COSH](#)
[NCOSH](#) North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Project
[NHCOSH](#) New Hampshire Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
[NYCOSH](#) New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health
[Philaposh](#) Philadelphia Project on Occupational Safety and Health
[RICOSH](#) Rhode Island Committee on Occupational Safety and Health
[SCWCOSH](#) South Central Wisconsin Committee on Occupational Safety and Health
[SEMCOSH](#) Southeast Michigan Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health,
[SEMCOSH Web Log](#)
[SoCalCOSH](#) Southern California COSH
[U.S. COSH](#)
[WesternMassCOSH](#) Western Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
[WISCOSH](#) Wisconsin Committee on Occupational Safety and Health
[WNYCOSH](#) Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health

Taking Honor in a Unusual Satiation

***On A Personal Note**

Since I was trying to ease some fears of what to expect, I had something interesting happen after the convention. My son had been sick prior to my leaving but seemed better so I took my leave. I was called and come home early, home to a sick family, even my dog was sick. Feeling sorry for myself I thought, "my word; I'm gone for a day and my home falls apart". After every one was well again I went on my normal schedule.

Some time ago I was ask to help out with this sweet little couple one of which had cancer and was battling it for the fourth time (two of which I knew him). I visited him every other week and called often to make sure things were going well. I arrive on Wednesday to find all his family was staying with him and he was not doing well. They informed me that he had been asking about me and wanted to know when I would come next and we discussed the progression and state of mind he was in. The next day Bill and I discussed his condition as he seen it, food, family and then I whipped him down with a washcloth, he loved that and I'm not sure why I started that but when my kids were sick it comforted them so I passed it along. He expressed he was tired so I went off to work on the home.

Within a few minutes he was ringing his buzzer and we (one of his daughters and I) went in to help. He insisted we get him up so he could use the restroom. After getting him back in bed he pronounced he felt like he didn't have much longer and ask for his other daughter who had stepped out. My response to him was "Oh Bill you'll be fine, your not going on my shift". Then he started convulsing, I will not get into the details but we spent about an hour working on him and with him; to keep him with us. Ultimately he passed away.

On my way home I called my husband and told him what happened. I explained to Mark that I couldn't deal with this (seeing another person die in front of me). I really did love this little man and what are the odds? If you had any experience in nursing homes you understand that people do know when they are short of time and need to have that last bit of control. They may chose to have loved ones around them or want to go alone so that they may keep their dignity (not that they lose it but that's how they feel). My Husband reminded me of all of this and that I should feel honored that he chose me to be with him and I should be proud I was able to help comfort him.

So why was it important to share this with you all. As many of you know I had to make a decision to take my brother off his life support, something that has haunted me daily. This is something many have and will have to endure. It is not an easy resolve however keep this in mind: YOU were one of the few who had the honor of being with them in their last moments, to let them know that YOU loved, cherished, comforted and fought for them.