

# Emergency Management/ Homeland Security Higher Education Regional Academic Collaborative Region X

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After-Action Review/Improvement Plan

April 3, 2018

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns the collaborative engagement objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related frameworks and guidance.

***This report was prepared by: James Wall and Shane Moore for the FEMA Higher Education Program.***

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## ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

<b>Name</b>	Emergency Management/Homeland Security Higher Education Regional Academic Collaborative Region X
<b>Dates</b>	Tuesday, April 3, 2018
<b>Scope</b>	The collaborative engagement was a 1-day, 4-hour long event for academics, practitioners, and stakeholders from FEMA Region X held at the FEMA Region X Headquarters in Bothell, Washington. There were also three “hub” locations within the region, established for convenience and better accessibility to the meeting. These gathering hubs were located at: Idaho State University, Meridian; Pierce College, Seattle; and Concordia University, Portland. The engagement consisted of presentations sharing examples of current practices, successful outcomes, and forthcoming efforts to move academic and research outputs to emergency management practice.
<b>Theme</b>	Practices of collaboration among faculty, researchers, students, and emergency management practitioners within Region X.
<b>Purpose</b>	To identify untapped opportunities, build awareness, and capture successful regional practices of collaboration with faculty, students, and researchers working with emergency management practitioners.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To bring together emergency management and homeland security academics and practitioners to share efforts and discuss opportunities.</li> <li>2. To capture the proceedings of the workshop in a shareable document to promote ongoing collaboration.</li> </ol>
<b>Sponsor</b>	FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Program
<b>Participating Organizations</b>	24 participants attended, both in-person and virtually, representing a variety of academic institutions, organizations, and governmental agencies. A comprehensive list of participants is available in Appendix A.
<b>Point of Contact</b>	Wendy Walsh, Higher Education Program Manager <a href="mailto:Wendy.walsh@fema.dhs.gov">Wendy.walsh@fema.dhs.gov</a> , 301-447-1262

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Tuesday, April 3, 2018, a group of practitioners and academics from FEMA Region X gathered at the FEMA Region X Headquarters in Bothell, Washington, to discuss collaborations among emergency management organizations, colleges, and universities within the region. The engagement created an opportunity for members of the regional emergency management community to form new relationships, engage in discussion, and share ongoing and planned best practices for successful collaboration. This event was sponsored by FEMA's Emergency Management Higher Education Program, and it was the latest in a series of workshops intended to foster collaboration and promote networking within the FEMA regions. Prior to this event, similar workshops had been held in Regions I, VI, and IX.

Following self-introductions by all of those attending the meeting both in-person and virtually, the workshop began with an overview of the Higher Education Program and was followed by a series of presentations. The presentations provided examples of successful collaborations that are currently underway, identified challenges, and suggested future opportunities. Those delivering presentations represented a variety of organizations, including the FEMA Higher Education Program, FEMA Region X National Preparedness Division, the Naval Postgraduate School's University and Agency Partnership Initiative, University of Washington's Institute for Hazards Mitigation Planning and Research, the Center of Excellence for Homeland Security Emergency Management, the Pierce College Homeland Security Emergency Management Department, Concordia University's Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Idaho State University's Emergency Services Department, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks' School of Management.

Topics covered by the presentations included fostering collaborations among academic and professional organizations, identifying and resolving the challenges of emergency management academic programs, integrating practical work experience and learning into academic programs, encouraging diversity of thought and progression in the occupation, and promoting and using youth-based emergency management programs.

At the conclusion of each presentation, all attendees, both in person and virtual, were able to address the presenter with their questions, as well as engage in discussion concerning topics which came up. The questions and discussions allowed the presenters the ability to showcase where they would like their programs to go in the future, beyond what time allowed for during the initial presentation. Enabling collaboration, merging theory and practice, and developing youth-based initiatives were determined to be the next steps to take.

## ENGAGEMENT PRESENTATIONS

The collaborative started with opening remarks from the facilitator. After self-introductions by all participants, including in person and virtual, presentations on collaborative practices were delivered. These included five in-person presentations and four virtual presentations. Key areas addressed included creating a strong network of academic collaboration and support for current students, building and maintaining strong alumni relations, incorporating training and experiential learning, strengthening the profession, and using technology to promote community resilience.

### Wendy Walsh: Collaboration, Gracious Space, and the FEMA Higher Education Program



Wendy Walsh is the FEMA Higher Education Program Manager from the National Training & Education Division (NTED) and National Training & Education System (NTES).

Wendy began the engagement presentations by commenting on how most of the people participating in-person knew each other, which speaks to the collaboration that has already occurred. She offered that this represents the opportunity for other regions to learn from how this collaborative effort formed and continues to develop. Wendy noted that as the newer generation begins to assume higher levels of responsibility in emergency management, it is important for the academic community to work together with FEMA to serve in an advisory capacity to keep up the momentum of progress that has already begun.

In order to set the tone for positive collaboration, Wendy presented The Center for Ethical Leadership's "Gracious Spaces" presentation. This presentation is intended to set a positive tone for collaboration. Key principles to remember which enable this are:

- Set a spirit of inclusiveness - Whether you are a practitioner, an academic, or a student, it is important that the focus is on creating a "we" instead of "us and them."
- Create a welcoming environment - Make every person feel comfortable, regardless of how the meeting is being presented, whether that be in-person, virtual, or a combination of the two.
- Welcoming the guest - We all come from different backgrounds and professions and may have different values that offer unique perspectives. FEMA values the concept of "serving the whole community," and not just serving people who think like us.
- Learning in public - There are high expectations from both practitioners and academics to know and understand their practice. So it is important to always leave space to learn and grow.

Wendy began her presentation on FEMA's Higher Education Program by addressing the question of how we can help expand people's understanding of the role of education in building competencies, as well as thinking about the connection between education, training, and exercises. An important point that was brought up early was the importance of not taking for granted that when we mention education that people understand what we are saying, especially

since we have been raised in a training culture. At times education becomes incorporated with training, such as what is taught at the Emergency Management Institute, and it is important to establish clarity in what is occurring. A useful way to accomplish this clarity is by providing examples of what the differences are and how they work together. Wendy expressed that one of the areas of continual progression is determining how to educate people about what education is, and what the competency areas are.

It is helpful to the National Training and Education System when educators asks themselves how the work they do leads to reviewing and updating or identifying and assessing risk; in this way, educators can access what they are doing in order to see if the system is not fully developing or including education. To this effect, Wendy stated, “The system is our common language. We cannot know how to answer these questions if we are not coordinating and talking about what we’re doing through the lens of these areas.”

The idea is not to limit creative thinking, or impinge upon academic freedom, but rather to cultivate an understanding amongst critical partners. The academic community can at times be critical, rather than critique the system, which has the effect of shutting down collaboration and preventing learning from each other. If collaboration suffers then it becomes difficult to educate the next generation of emergency managers to ready the Nation for the next catastrophic disaster.

Wendy also discussed the efforts to reduce the complexity of FEMA, which involves streamlining how they do business so that it is not so arduous for stakeholders and the whole community to work with the Agency. Education has the ability to identify the areas of complexity within FEMA processes that those involved on the inside cannot see.

The last subject that Wendy touched on were the Higher Education Program’s key areas of focus:

- Reflection – Taking the time to stop and critically think.
- Mental Models – Conducting interactive activities such as hosting webinars where people can listen and then discuss.
- Shared Vision – Stopping to consider how education and FEMA fit in to objectives, conducting focus groups to establish and address core competencies, and collectively determine learning objectives.
- Team Learning – Continually addressing how we can learn together.
- Regional Collaborations – Hosting collaborative sessions like this to learn everything that everyone is doing.

For more information: [FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute’s Higher Education Program](https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/)  
(This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/>)

### Tiffany Anderson: FEMA Region X and Youth Round Table



Tiffany Anderson, from FEMA Region X, is the Deputy Director for the National Preparedness Division (NPD). She presented on initiatives aimed at building a culture of preparedness. To accomplish this goal, NPD has been working with universities on projects concerning catastrophic disasters. These projects are intended to help bridge the gap between the science of disasters and local laypersons so that they can understand what the risks are with the hope that by understanding the risks, they will be better enabled to prepare for what those hazards are.

Over the last year, NPD has been trying to understand and better support populations that are disproportionately impacted by disasters (e.g., the elderly, people with access and functional needs, and youth). Youth were chosen to be the first group to focus attention on to accomplish this goal. Youth centered initiatives have begun by collaborating with youth-serving organizations to build coalitions. These coalitions are aimed at integrating emergency management practices within their organizations with the hope that by reaching youth, parents and the whole community at large will be reached as well. Round table discussions have already been held in Washington and Oregon to begin this dialogue. The ultimate hope for these initiatives are that organizations will give speed to the momentum of bringing everyone together to continue work on their own.

Another initiative that Tiffany discussed was the creation of a youth preparedness camp in 2019. The camp, which already has the support and funding from FEMA, is intended to create and promote a culture of preparedness along with increased community resiliency. The target population for this camp is high school youth between the grades of 8 to 11. Some of the proposed activities and skills taught to the youth include CERT training, hands-on basic emergency preparedness training, light Search and Rescue, and fire safety. Tiffany pointed out that Region VI has already accomplished this initiative through a collaboration with the Texas School of Safety.

The final initiative Tiffany spoke on was the efforts to create a Region X Youth Preparedness Council, modeled after the National Youth Preparedness Council. This Region X Council would attempt to draw in the candidates who did not make it to the National Council.

For more information: [Youth Preparedness Council](https://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council>); [Youth Preparedness](https://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness>); [Mount St. Helens Institute](http://www.mshinstitute.org/learn/for-parents/geogirls.html) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.mshinstitute.org/learn/for-parents/geogirls.html>)

**Richard Suttie: University and Agency Partnership Initiative**

Richard Suttie, from the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), presented virtually about the University and Agency Partnership Initiative (UAPI). The UAPI is a university homeland security support program placed under the Center for Homeland Security and Defense in Monterey, California.

The original Master's program consisted of cohorts between 140 and 150 students a year. It was determined that the number of graduates being produced was nowhere near enough to serve our Nation's workforce development and leadership for homeland security. In order to meet their desired outcomes, CHDS began providing free resources to any institution that would accept it, thus creating the UAPI. Out of the 370 partners established in the program, 60 remain active. The remaining are either in a passive or dormant state. Active members of the program share curriculum, syllabi, learning modules, reading material, recorded lectures, and have access to a digital library of 190,000 free-to-use source documents.

The growth of new programs has reached a stabilizing point, with about one new program added a month. The next level of engagement is cementing and furthering an engagement between agency and academic institutions to create resiliency. "We all know what doesn't match, so it's very difficult outside of a short-lived project to create persistence to relationships, and that is what leads to resiliency" (Suttie, 2018).

UAPI highlighted, through several examples, how it has accomplished its engagement goals:

- Established an effort with the Office of Homeland Security in San Diego, CA to collaboratively create goals with the Mayor's office. Quarterly meetings are held with the Mayor in which students and faculty share research. A variety of community stakeholders are invited to attend this 2-hour session.
- Creation of goals that everyone owns.
- Using Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) that everyone creates and signs by position to establish persistence.
- While partnering with Ohio State University to provide a technology insertion, an MOA was later added and quarterly meetings extended beyond the project. The project was the catalyst for establishing a lasting relationship which has now led to further development of the program to include a competency-based technology asset management system to their emergency management response system.

The presentation closed with a final note concerning challenges in collaboration. It was offered that challenges should be embraced to collectively address the issues. Common challenges include battle rhythms, preconceived notions, anti-intellectualism, different priorities, and pride of ownership. To confront these challenges, it's been recommended to host MOA Workshops with potential partners.

For more information: [Naval Postgraduate School](https://www.chds.us/c/academic-programs/uapi) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://www.chds.us/c/academic-programs/uapi>)

**Bob Freitag: Mitigation through Storytelling**

Bob Freitag is a Senior Instructor and Director of the Institute for Hazards Mitigation Planning and Research (IHMP). The University of Washington Institute for Hazards Mitigation is an interdisciplinary academic institute housed in the Department of Urban Design and Planning within the College of Built Environments at the University of Washington.

The IHMP uses an approach that examines emergency management mitigation practices over the long term. These mitigation practices focus on areas which are typically considered to be secondary concerns, but are in actuality just as important as those concerns that are considered primary. Mitigation activities, such as protecting homes through the creation of fire-adaptive communities, are important not just to save the communities, but also to restore the affected forests.

Through the use of scenario planning and storytelling, participants establish what values they hold important and identify their asset providers. Next, they encounter an unexpected disaster in the “story” (fire, flood, etc.) and must determine how the damaged assets have affected their values. Finally, participants are asked how they can preserve their values and in what types of mitigation activities they can engage to protect them.

An important takeaway learned from this has been, while the common Hazus approach is useful in determining certain mitigation activities, it is a linear approach that does not allow you to look at the whole problem comprehensively. Conversely, the storytelling approach allows the participants to establish what is of value to them and what assets provide them through positive inquiry. By damaging the assets that provide value, participants have to look for ways to mitigate that damage, or discover different assets that provide the same values.

For more information: [College of Built Environments University of Washington](http://mitigate.be.uw.edu/) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <http://mitigate.be.uw.edu/>)

**Linda Crerar – Washington Center of Excellence for Homeland Security Emergency Management**

Linda Crerar is the Director of Washington State's Center of Excellence for Homeland Security Emergency Management (HSEM). Linda is an experienced business and government executive with more than 35 years working in the private and public sectors. She has a proven track record of promoting organizational and community preparedness. Linda has served on the State's Homeland Security Committee and its Strategic Plan Development Working Group, State's Pandemic Flu Workgroup, and as the executive staff to Washington's Emergency Management Council prior to coming to the Center in 2010. Linda is a dedicated professional helping to build Washington State's economic vitality through the delivery of effective training, education, and resources which support our community and technical colleges, their constituencies and our government, and business and industry partners.

Linda presented initiatives and programs the HSEM Center of Excellence is undertaking with 34 Washington State Community and Technical colleges. In the field of HSEM and with six related career pathways, Linda's work has led to the creation of Certificate, Associate, and Bachelor degree programs. A collaborating college model has been developed which allows participating colleges to share a central HSEM program across the State, thereby reducing costs generated by maintaining individual programs. Linda stressed that colleges should be determined to help students gain employment in the emergency management field. In order to accomplish this, they must assist in finding internships, as well as volunteer and job opportunities for their students. Stressing the importance of the topic, she reiterated that work experience requirements in entry-level positions are a major factor in students getting hired. To this end, The Center works to provide students with the opportunities needed to meet entry-level requirements. This includes access to Work Experience Marketplace, a space on the program website which helps connect employers with students. There is also work underway to establish apprenticeship opportunities along the career pathways of emergency management.

To gain a better understanding of the job market, Linda pointed out that 60% of employers in the HSEM field are in the private sector. Her view: advisory boards should be a varied mixture of public and private to reflect this reality. All faculty and administrator positions should make it a priority to ensure their students get jobs. Higher education institutions need to be able to demonstrate to the state legislature that programs prepare students for employment in their field of study. Linda's own advisory board is large in order to understand the swath of employment needs and report back to the education system.

For more information: [Center of Excellence for Homeland Security Emergency Management](http://www.coehsem.com/)  
(This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.coehsem.com/>).

## John Pennington – Merging Theory and Practice



John recently took over as Pierce College’s Program Director for the Homeland Security Emergency Management Department, which includes Certificate, Associates, and a newly developed Bachelors of Applied Science in HSEM. John expressed that he was excited to take over a program that had learning objectives and student outcomes already developed, but otherwise was a blank slate. This blank slate gave John the opportunity to leverage his 24 years of public service, 30 Stafford Act declared natural disasters, and experience at the Federal, state, local, and tribal levels to make a significant impact in the development of course content that merges theory and practice. The new BAS in HSEM is primarily an online program to meet the needs of students all across the State, and includes offerings of hybrid classes each quarter to meet the requirements for Post-9/11 G.I. Bill housing allowances. There are two cohorts each year consisting of approximately 15 students each.

During his presentation, John borrowed a term from emergency management professional, Eric Holdeman<sup>1</sup>; that emergency management has entered its “Second Golden Age.” He then expressed that we have to design programs and curriculum that are reflective of a new age. John stated that emergency management is finally being rejected as a subset of public safety (e.g., law enforcement, public works, and fire). Efforts being conducted at the Emergency Management Institute<sup>2</sup> continue to take place to define the new “Who We Are” discussion in emergency management. John stated that we have been practicing emergency management in this country for a long time, but we have not yet created the proper framework. His program seeks to develop emergency management professionals who are facilitators, coordinators, and collaborators of this needed framework. John stated that, “I’m bringing on professors who have deep, detailed experiences in so many different angles.” His expectations for his students are to understand and grasp the foundation of emergency management and its history; that there are management structures that should exist, and there are some that should not exist; that the students understand, comprehensively, about tactical-level operations, but the mindset of the student is strategic in nature; that students pause and take the time to stop and critically think about; and last that students are created that can assume leadership when vacuums are created.

The last subject that John touched on was the removal of focus on parallel tracks. Instead of focusing on homeland security, emergency management, business continuity, and humanitarian and disaster assistance as individual disciplines, focus on the interdisciplinary.

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<sup>1</sup> [Eric Holdeman](http://ericholdeman.com/about/) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <http://ericholdeman.com/about/>) is the Principal for Eric Holdeman and Associates. Eric’s areas of specialty include building regional partnerships between agencies, governments, the private sector, and non-profits in the field of homeland security and emergency management.

<sup>2</sup> The [mission](https://training.fema.gov/mission.aspx) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://training.fema.gov/mission.aspx>) of the Emergency Management Institute is to support the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA by increasing the ability of U.S. officials in Emergency Management at all levels of government to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the potential effects of all types of disasters and emergencies on the American people.

For more information: [Pierce College Homeland Security Emergency Management](https://www.pierce.ctc.edu/hsem) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://www.pierce.ctc.edu/hsem>).

### **Laurie Holien – Leveraging Innovative Technological Approaches for Homeland Security and Emergency Management in Higher Education**



Prior to joining Concordia University - Portland, Holien was the Deputy Director of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management. She has 17 years of operational experience in Emergency Management and Critical Infrastructure. Her background includes consulting as an Operations Analyst for Scientific Research Corporation, collaborating on scopes of work for the Department of the Navy (SPAWAR), DHS, FEMA, and other local emergency management agencies. She earned a Masters in Home Defense and Security from the Naval Postgraduate School.

Laurie Holien presented information on Concordia University's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Program and featured a recruitment commercial to showcase what makes this program special. Since the establishment of the program in 2012, and her joining in 2016, Laurie has helped redirect the program away from the cohort system and adopt an electives-based approach. This approach allows students to customize their degree in a way that opens up specific opportunities in the fields of both homeland security and emergency management. The program also tries to provide services to the practitioners in the field, particularly on the training side, which enables a crossover for students to be able to participate.

Laurie most wanted to demonstrate the existence of technology in the everyday; sharing another video that focused on the invaluable integration of technology specifically in the field of emergency management. She demonstrated the need for practitioners and students to change as technology changes. However, she cautioned that a balance needs to be articulated, as many students are looking for online program options. Online programs allow students to access their education anywhere at any time, which poses a problem in accessing one of the best uses of new technology: virtual reality labs. The social engagement that occurs in traditional classrooms is really imperative.

Concordia's program makes excellent use of technologies to educate and train their students. Laurie stated that the program makes sure to infuse technology into all course content. She also expressed that additional uses of technology in the field have inspired Concordia to be that open space for academia and practitioners to collaborate. Concordia's virtual reality simulation labs are working with technology developers to create an immersive learning environment that allows students to experience real and dynamic scenarios. Laurie offered a word of caution concerning the use of technology, though, acknowledging that there are barriers to the advancement of technology in an academic environment. Those barriers include high initial costs, maintenance costs, and technology becoming obsolete, and seeking funding to address these issues. An exciting new prospect that is still in the exploration phase is the program's ability to provide distance learning students with VR capabilities.

For more information: [Center for Emergency Solutions](https://centerforemergencyolutions.com/) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://centerforemergencyolutions.com/>).

### **Michael Mikitish - Immersive and Engaging Online Emergency Services Degrees**



Michael Mikitish is the Chair of the Emergency Services Department and Director of the Institute of Emergency Management at Idaho State University (ISU). Michael holds a Master of Science in Business Administration from Boston University, a Master's in Public Administration from Boise State University, and a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration, Criminal Justice, from the University of Arizona. Michael spent 23 year serving in the U.S. Army, fulfilling a plethora of impressive duties including: Pershing Missiles Platoon Commander and Operations Officer, Field Artillery Battery Commander,

Combat Maneuver Training Center Observer Controller, Field Artillery Instructor, Battalion Executive Officer, Division Fire Support Coordinator, and Training Support Battalion Commander.

Starting off is the Institute of Emergency Management where the program concentrated on and conducted all of the Homeland Security training for the State of Idaho. As funding started decreasing for this training, the program started adding additional online degrees for homeland security and emergency management professions. Today, IEM continues to offer specialized workshops, courses, and certificates. Through ISU's Kasiska Division of Health Sciences, School of Health Professions (SHP), IEM supports the Emergency Services Department in offering degree programs and academic certificate programs to meet the professional and career development needs of those employed in or planning a career in Emergency Management, Fire Services Administration, Paramedic Science, Emergency Medical Services, Community Paramedic, or Community Health Worker fields (ISU, N.d.).

Idaho State University now includes an entire emergency services department offering a variety of Associates and Bachelor of Science degrees, including Paramedic Sciences, Emergency Management, Fire Services Administration, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Paramedic. Michael noted that the AS degree is a prerequisite to initiating the BS degree. The students in these online courses are required to be in live attendance. This requirement was based on an early needs assessment indicating that students desired a traditional classroom environment. These live, virtual classrooms provide students the ability to interact, dialogue, and engage and get immediate response. The program has used different technology platforms, such as Blackboard Collaborate, and is currently exploring options that include Zoom<sup>3</sup>, in order to provide the most beneficial interaction possible.

ISU depends on its internal advisory committee to provide constructive collaboration. This advisory committee consists of the program's adjunct faculty. With the exception of this degree, all of the programs use adjunct faculty. By using adjunct faculty, the programs are able to

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<sup>3</sup> [Zoom](https://zoom.us/) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://zoom.us/>) is an online video conferencing platform that allows collaborators around the world the ability to see and hear each other speak. It allows for the creation of virtual classrooms as well as cross-platform messaging and file sharing.

employ experts in the field, regardless of their physical location. They also have an external advisory committee that consists of community stakeholders and employers, which enables feedback on their programs. Lastly, because these programs are online, ISU only charges student in-state fees along with a small technology fee.

Some of the active partnerships ISU participates in are with Ada County Paramedics, Idaho Falls Fire Department, Idaho EMS Bureau, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, U.S. Fire Administration, and Wyoming Office of Emergency Medical Services.

For more information: [Institute of Emergency Management at the ISU-Meridian Health Sciences Center](https://www.isu.edu/idiem/) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <https://www.isu.edu/idiem/>).

### **Dr. Cameron Carlson: Program Director for University of Alaska-Fairbanks Homeland Security and Emergency Management**



Dr. Cameron Carlson spent most of his early career with the U.S. Army. During most of this time, he was a Special Forces Officer. Dr. Carlson also spent time in Iraq during Operation Enduring Freedom, before transitioning in 2003 to academia at the University of Alaska - Fairbanks. He was tasked as the Department Chair for Military Science and Leadership until 2006. Following this, he became the Director of Emergency Management for the University of Alaska - Statewide system for 3 years before spending another year in Iraq as a project manager for Triple Canopy. In 2010, Dr. Carlson became the Program Director for the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Program at the University of Alaska - Fairbanks, where he continues to work.

The Homeland Security and Emergency Management Program at the University of Alaska - Fairbanks aims to train students to operate and lead in a post-9/11 environment with the ultimate goal of preparing emergency management and homeland security professionals to face new and real challenges. As the frequency and complexity of man-made, natural, and technological disasters increase, so does the need for trained professionals ready to rise to the challenge. The University of Alaska – Fairbank’s Homeland Security Program has won several awards including: the 2017 Top Military Advanced Education and Transition, 2017 Best Online Programs for Homeland Security, and the 2017 College Choice for best Homeland Security program.

The Homeland Security and Emergency Management Program at the University of Alaska - Fairbanks works with community and regional partners, as well as with student organizations to help prepare students for life after school. The community partnerships include internships with local EM organizations, Pogo Mine, and Red Cross. There is also a university fire department on campus that employs mostly students, extending hands-on experience during coursework. Regional partnerships include the state emergency management and a contract with the

Department of Defense for Arctic Security. Finally, students can join a student chapter of IAEM<sup>4</sup> and the Order of the Sword and Shield Honor<sup>5</sup> Society.

For more information: [University of Alaska Fairbanks UAF School of Management](#) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL:  
<http://www.uaf.edu/som/degrees/undergraduate/bem/>)

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<sup>4</sup> [IAEM \(International Association of Emergency Managers\)](#) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.iaem.com/>) is a globally recognized emergency management organization. IAEM offers emergency management certifications, trainings, conferences, and has job postings for emergency management related jobs.

<sup>5</sup> [The Order of the Sword and Shield Honor Society](#) (This link can also be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.securityhonorsociety.org/about.html>) is first and only academic and professional honor society dedicated exclusively to homeland security, intelligence, emergency management, and all protective security disciplines.

## ENGAGEMENT DISCUSSION



The original agenda called for small group breakout discussions to be followed by a re-convening of the entire group, but due to time constraints, there were no breakout discussions. Instead, all participants in the meeting, including both in person and virtual, engaged in discussion after each presenter finished. The presenters were asked questions about their academic programs and organizations. This method of engagement also produced secondary discussions, as some attendees were able to address or add to the questions being asked, or provide additional insight.

From this discussion, four key themes emerged: (1) identifying and resolving the challenges of emergency management academic programs, (2) integrating practical work experience and learning into academic programs, (3) encouraging diversity of thought and progression in the occupation, and (4) promoting and utilizing youth-based emergency management programs.

The first theme that emerged from the group discussion was the importance of **identifying and resolving the challenges of emergency management academic programs**. The difficulty of funding emergency management programs was discussed by several of those from academic programs in the region. Concordia University noted that while their use of technology is extremely beneficial to the development of their students, it can be costly to implement and maintain. Concordia went on to further explain that newer technologies are being developed which can provide similar experiences at a fraction of the cost. Washington State's collaborating college system was also mentioned as a method of cost-sharing programs throughout a state's academic system. Through the collaborating college system, general education requirements are completed at the college, but the core curriculum is shared, and all students share the same courses. This method allows a college or university to adopt a program while requiring only a minimal investment of resources, personnel, and administration. The barrier which still remains is a lack of understanding on the part of administrators and others in the university in terms of what emergency management is and why it is an important field and area of study.

A second theme that emerged from the discussion was the importance of **integrating practical work experience and learning into academic programs**. Efforts were discussed in the various programs to merge theory and practice to produce students who have both an understanding of emergency management theory and practical application. The participants could not stress enough how, in the professional world, students are expected to know how to perform their jobs. However, this often isn't teachable since most of the focus is on general concepts or theory. As a means to bridge theory and practice, the participants emphasized the value of internships, volunteering, and trying to obtain entry-level work. The goal of these are to enhance students education so that they can begin relating what they learn in the classroom to how professionals make decisions. This type of learning and participation allows for better training of future emergency management professionals. Lastly, every single presenter touched on the issue and value of internships in his/her programs. Internships provide students with the ability to apply their learning in the working environment, offering the connection between theory and practice,

as well as working toward job requirements which require time and experience in completing specific job functions.

A third theme that emerged from the discussion was the importance of **encouraging diversity of thought and progression in the occupation**. Academic programs which offer a diversity of courses enable future emergency management professionals to develop a strong foundation of emergency management principles and practices. Tribal collaboration within Region X can help set the model for the rest of the nation and further the initiative towards a culture of preparedness. Additionally, different methods of instruction using both technology and social interaction need to be explored to develop strong technical and critical thinking abilities. Lastly, it was discussed how entry-level positions often required more experience and skills than college graduates are graduating with. It was recommended that efforts need to be made to push back against employers to enable recent graduates to obtain employment.

Finally, the fourth theme that emerged from the discussion was **promoting and utilizing youth-based emergency management programs**. The topic of Work Study came up early in the discussions and continued to be brought up in different discussions. Efforts are underway between the FEMA Higher Education Program, the EPA, and the Department of Education to explore opportunities that provide students with hands-on assistance in recovery operations and educational initiatives in Puerto Rico. It was explained that there are \$2.7 million dollars that have been allocated to these needs and must be spent by the end of this summer. Questions that educational institutions would need to consider are: 1) What do you have to offer? 2) What do the students have to offer? 3) What does your curricula have to offer in developing the student? These efforts to support Puerto Rico would not necessarily have to be conducted on location. Additional youth-based initiatives were discussed such as establishing programs modeled after the Mount Saint Helens Institute's Geogirls<sup>6</sup>, Camp BLAZE<sup>7</sup>, and the Washington Youth Academy<sup>8</sup>. Additional youth-focused discussions covered New York's School for Emergency Management (grades 9–11), Washington's Skill Centers (K–12), Maryland's Mid-Atlantic Center for Emergency Management<sup>9</sup>, and Teen CERT<sup>10</sup> programs in Washington State's high schools. Lastly, it was mentioned that DHS has an academic advisory council that focuses on the

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<sup>6</sup> [Geogirls](http://www.mshinstitute.org/learn/for-parents/geogirls.html) (This link can also be accessed at the following link: <http://www.mshinstitute.org/learn/for-parents/geogirls.html>) is a program targeted towards young girls to teach them about the geology and technology fields. They explore volcanoes in their area and learn about the dangers they pose to humans and how scientists monitor them.

<sup>7</sup> [Camp BLAZE](https://www.campblazefirecamp.org/) (This link can also be accessed at the following link: <https://www.campblazefirecamp.org/>) is a camp for young women to help provide mentorship to young women in the fire services field. Their main goal is to provide leadership and career opportunities for women.

<sup>8</sup> [The Washington Youth Academy](https://www.mil.wa.gov/youth-academy) (This link can also be accessed at the following link: <https://www.mil.wa.gov/youth-academy>) provides at-risk youth with safe and disciplined learning to improve their education and employment potential.

<sup>9</sup> [Maryland's Mid-Atlantic Center for Emergency Management](https://macematfcc.wordpress.com/) (This link can also be accessed at the following link: <https://macematfcc.wordpress.com/>) is a program sponsored by Frederick Community College in Maryland.

<sup>10</sup> [Teen CERT](https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/28048) (This link can also be accessed at the following link: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/28048>) is something that expands beyond Washington State. It is something that FEMA believes in and provides public information and training on.

practice of emergency management on college campuses and will be expanding to the K-12 system, which presents the opportunities such as a youth tabletop exercise.

## MOVING FORWARD

From the individual presentations and the group discussion that followed each, three themes emerged in terms of moving forward: (1) enabling collaboration, (2) merging theory and practice, and (3) developing youth-based initiatives.

In terms of *enabling collaboration*, participants discussed the importance of holding meetings such as this one to foster an environment of collaboration across the field of emergency management. Bringing together education, public agencies, private sector employers, and non-profit organizations serves to open a dialogue which can lead to the successful development of educational programs and initiatives that meet the demands of the current workforce as well as identify opportunities to improve programs based on employer feedback. Arranging and participating in opportunities such as FEMA Higher Education Collaborative provides a unique opportunity to enable regions to come together to share best practices and identify areas of success and concern. These types of opportunities should be better attended and represented to foster this collaboration.

In terms of *merging theory and practice*, participants each shared their unique approaches to managing the obstacle of how to take traditional learning and transform it into useful and practical knowledge that a student can directly apply to his/her future career in emergency management. Every institution took notes on the best practices expressed during the presentations and discussions in how they can incorporate these different styles into their programs to increase the diversity of learning.

Finally, in terms of *developing youth-based initiatives*, participants all agreed that fostering a “culture of preparedness” was the next important step to take in education and outreach. It was expressed that the most effective way to increase public awareness of emergency management, gain public support and participation, and help train the next generation of emergency management professionals was to engage youth. Many different models and successful organizations were identified to either participate with, or use as a guide on how to establish similar state or regional programs. Finally, youth programs offer the opportunity for traditionally under-represented groups to gain a foothold in emergency management, which in turn brings greater community buy-in and diversity to the field.

## SUCCESSSES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### Planning, Logistics, and Technology

**Strengths:** The event was attended and represented by all states in Region X (Washington, Idaho, California, Oregon, and Alaska). Invitations to the event were sent electronically and collected through EventBrite, including the participant's name, institution, if he/she is attending in person or virtually, and email. Of the 24 participants, 19 attended in person at FEMA Region X Headquarters, Idaho State University, University of Alaska, and Concordia University, and 5 attended virtually. Virtual participation was facilitated via Adobe Connect. FEMA Region X site security were aware of the meetings occurrence in their facility and were very helpful in assisting all of the visitors.

**Area for Improvement I:** Reducing time delays associated with virtual presentations.

Action: Prior to the event, practice with all the virtual presenters on presenting their materials through Adobe Connect so they may become familiar with the program and all of its functions.

**Area for Improvement II:** Provide time for participants to eat lunch.

Action: Schedule time for an uninterrupted lunch, so that the noise from those eating does not interfere with the virtual participant's ability to hear the presentations and discussions.

### Symposium Content

**Strengths:** The presentations addressed a number of important issues, including boosting collaborator commitment, identifying and resolving the challenges of emergency management academic programs, integrating practical work experience and learning into academic coursework, encouraging diversity and progression in the occupation, and promoting and utilizing youth-based emergency management programs. The format of the meeting was altered so that discussion took place after a presenter had finished, which allowed some immediate collaboration to occur, as well as clarification of topics and issues that were addressed.

**Area for Improvement III:** Allow enough time for all presenters to speak.

Action: Enforce time limits for each presenter to ensure that all presenters have enough time to complete their presentations. Encourage those who wish to speak more to collaborate with each other if time allows at the end, or to speak with each other after the meeting.

**Area for Improvement IV:** Encourage participation from local, county, and state practitioners.

Action: Gain solid commitments from local, county, and state practitioners of emergency management to participate in the meeting. There were current practitioners/educators in the meeting, but they were primarily there in the role of educators.

**APPENDIX A: ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS**

Last Name	First Name	Email	Affiliation
<b><u>Attended in Person</u></b>			
Anderson	Tiffany	<a href="mailto:tiffany.anderson@fema.dhs.gov">tiffany.anderson@fema.dhs.gov</a>	FEMA Region X National Preparedness Division
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<i><b>Did Not Attend</b></i>			
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## APPENDIX B: ENGAGEMENT BROCHURE

### Emergency Management/Homeland Security Higher Education Regional Academic Collaborative Region X

Tuesday, April 3, 2018, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (PDT)

FEMA Region X – Bothell, WA; Concordia University – Portland, OR; Idaho State University – Meridian, ID  
Specific Location & Virtual Participant Information will be provided prior to the event.

***Purpose:*** To build awareness, capture successful regional practices of collaboration with faculty, students and researchers working with emergency management practitioners as well as to identify untapped opportunities.

***Desired outcome:*** To support regional community connection and collaboration as well as create a dynamic regional specific after-action report to identify academic and broader community resources, capabilities, and expertise to support ongoing regional academic and practitioner partnership.

#### ***Agenda:***

10:00–10:10 - Welcome From FEMA Region X

10:10–10:30 - Introductions

10:30–12:00 - Quick overview of FEMA Higher Education & UAPI programs & successful regional practices to be briefed in 5-7 mins with a couple minutes for questions:

- FEMA Region X - Youth Round Table - Tiffany Anderson
- UAPI Program - Rich Sutie
- Risk assessment, Hazus and storytelling - Bob Freitag
- Washington Center of Excellence model - Linda Crerar
- Merging Theory & Practice in Program Implementation - John Pennington
- Emerging technology Integration for Emergency Management - Laurie Holien
- Virtual synchronistic class delivery - Michael Mikitish
- Alaska Efforts - Program Director, Cameron Carlson

12:00–1:00 - Working lunch: Small group dialogues to develop idea pathways to practice

- Discuss presentations & other successful practices that could be shared and expanded
- Who are the missing critical stakeholders in the region?
- Who cares about academic and practitioner collaboration?
- Are there challenges that these groups face?
- What is possible in this collaboration?

1:00–1:45 - Small group sharing with the whole group

1:45–2:00 - Next steps, wrap-up & gratitude



<http://citl.illinois.edu/paradigms/design-thinking>