



## 2010 IAEM Student Awards

By **Brian Silva**

On behalf of the IAEM-SC Awards Committee, I would like to thank our judges (Julie Pugal, Robert McDaniels, and Daniel Hahn) for volunteering their time to review the numerous submissions for the four official awards handed out this year:

### ***Student of the Year***

In recognition of a student who has made a significant contribution to the field of emergency management. In his nomination letter, this student was described as making "our community better prepared for all-hazards response" while working to connect Air Force students and the IAEM-SC in multiple ways. For these, and multiple reasons, the Awards Committee congratulates **Joseph Bechtold**.

### ***Student Chapter of the Year***

In recognition of the Student Chapter who has made significant contributions in promoting IAEM and the Student Council in the field of Emergency Management. This Chapter produces a regular newsletter and a distinguished speaker series for its members. During National Preparedness Month, they helped local Boy & Girl Scouts earn their Emergency Preparedness merit badges. For these, and multiple reasons, the Awards Committee congratulates the **American Military University / American Public University Chapter**.

### ***Chapter Advisor of the Year***

In recognition of the Chapter Advisor who has promoted the work of their Student Chapter and IAEM as a whole. This Advisor has helped his Chapter to receive Chapter of the Year two years in a row. He has helped numerous students achieve both the AEM and CEM credentials. For these, and multiple reasons, the Awards Committee congratulates **Dr. Chris Reynolds of AMU/APU**.

### ***Ally Award***

In recognition of a person or organization who has assisted, promoted, or supported IAEM students. The first recipient has worked extensively to assist students achieve their AEM and CEM. For this, and multiple reasons, the Awards Committee congratulates **Christian Lanphere**.

The second recipient has worked with the AMU/APU Chapter to complete over 4000 hours over emergency management related community service. For this, and multiple reasons, the Awards Committee congratulates the **AMU /APU Chapter Epsilon Pi Phi Honor Society**.

## **What You Should Know About Emergency Management Degrees**

By Valerie Lucus-McEwen, CEM

Emergency management is a growing profession and is projected to continue growing at a rate of 20 percent or more, according to O\*NET OnLine (created for the U.S. Department of Labor), which rates emergency management specialists as a "bright outlook occupation" in the labor market.

More than 180 emergency management programs dot the country's higher education landscape, and approximately 100 more colleges and universities are investigating, proposing or developing some sort of hazard, disaster and emergency management program, according to (Continued on page 2)

### **In this issue –**

- 1 – 2010 IAEM Student Awards / What You Should Know about Emergency Management Degrees
- 4 – New National Terrorism Advisory System
- 5 & 6 - IAEM Certification Recognition Ribbon Now Available
- 7 – Tucson Style Shooting / APUS Chapter News
- 8 – Chapter News and contact information  
[www.iaem.com/students](http://www.iaem.com/students)



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS

# THE RESPONDER

## NEWS OF THE IAEM-STUDENT COUNCIL

February 2011  
Volume 4 Issue 2

background information provided for FEMA's 13th Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Conference held in June.

Just as the number of emergency management higher education programs is growing, the number of graduates from those programs is increasing, and expectations about what those degrees mean is often overstated.

Students expect an emergency management degree to give them the skills and knowledge they need to walk out of school and into a good job in the field. And employers expect an emergency management degree to give those job applicants skills and knowledge to make up for their lack of experience. Neither expectation is very realistic.

The reality is that an emergency management degree helps the job seeker in a competitive environment, and it assures an employer that the applicants are up-to-date on the latest developments in the field. An emergency management degree doesn't replace experience.

For the job seeker, a college degree really doesn't guarantee anything — to which anyone with an English literature degree can testify. These days, degrees are used to eliminate candidates in job pools. Anyone looking for employment in a professional field can find herself at a real disadvantage without one — especially in a fledgling and popular field like emergency management.

"Right now, emergency management is a really competitive environment. There are not a lot of jobs and qualified people," said Lucien Canton, a private consultant with 30 years of experience in local and federal government.

A degree will "bump you up" in the application process, Canton said. It assumes the applicant has college-level academic skills: He or she can write well, conduct research, synthesize information, analyze and interpret regulations, and formulate and follow plans through from beginning to end. He described a degree as "sort of a finishing school."

### **Understanding the Nuances**

Certainly emergency management is becoming more complicated and demanding. The numbers and consequences of both natural and man-made disasters are increasing, and public- and private-sector agencies are being taken to task for failing to mitigate or prevent the effects of those disasters.

the political and socio-economic nuances of disasters, as well as how to write a continuity of operations plan and maintain an emergency operations center.

"On the practical side, a degree gives you exposure to areas you don't have experience in," said Daryl Spiewak, the emergency, safety and compliance program manager for the Brazos River Authority in Waco, Texas. "It gives you an immersion into the field without going through the years of hard knocks and learning it all the hard way. It means you are more up-to-date on current policy, theory and regulations than someone with just experience."

Think of it as a shortcut, in a way. Spiewak suggested that an emergency management degree can significantly shorten the learning curve most emergency managers went through to get where they are today. However, an emergency management degree doesn't provide the experience employers are seeking, Spiewak said. "The degree says you can do things by the book; it doesn't say you can apply it yet."

If you deconstruct any profession — from an engineer to an attorney to a plumber — it breaks down into a predictable progression. In the 14th century, the time of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, careers developed through the apprentice-journeyman-master model that still exists today in education and many trades. For emergency management, that progression is the triad expressed as training, education and experience. The traditional emergency manager role was planning and response, and most emergency managers came from response-oriented backgrounds — like fire, law and military — with strong training and field experience.

It's important to remember that emergency management is moving from a narrowly focused occupation to a multilevel profession. As it's grown into a profession, education has asserted itself, linking training and experience, and creating a new paradigm for the well rounded emergency manager. (continued on page 3)



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS

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Volume 4 Issue 2

But training isn't the same as experience; education can't replace experience. And employers are looking for applicants with all three: training, experience and education.

Even if you already have training and experience, it will be harder to follow the traditional path of a lateral move from a response organization into emergency management without a college degree. On the flip side: It also will be hard to get that first job out of college without some experience.

Scott Preston returned to school to get a master's degree in emergency management after working long enough to get his Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) certification. He is currently the business continuity manager (located within the Emergency Management Department) at the University of Washington in Seattle. When Preston earned his political science bachelor's degree in the mid-1990s, emergency management degrees weren't available. His first job in emergency management was as a full-time volunteer helping the local emergency management office with its continuity of operation and continuity of government planning.

### *Get Competitive*

There will be increasing requirements for emergency managers, and the field is going to get more crowded so "it pays to be competitive," Preston said.

"Scott speaks from direct experience and now mentors many new students and mid-career folks in the emergency management field," said Steve Charvat, the emergency management director for the University of Washington, and Preston's supervisor.

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"Scott speaks from direct experience and now mentors many new students and mid-career folks in the emergency management field," said Steve Charvat, the emergency management director for the University of Washington, and Preston's supervisor,

To help, Preston wrote a guide, *Suggested Career Tips for Emergency Management*, that is posted on the university's website and outlines how to start a career in the field. "If this is the career you want," he said, "you have to make your own luck, find your own opportunities." There's no substitute for experience, Preston admitted, "but there has to be a balance between what makes a well rounded emergency manager and someone else with oodles of response experience and nothing else."

Higher education is that balance between experience and an emergency management career. "The time will come when you aren't an emergency manager if you don't have that degree," Canton said. "You can't just say you are an engineer or a carpenter. You can't just walk in the door and say you are an emergency manager."

The new paradigm for emergency managers — education and experience — is one that Lindsey Holman embraces. She's a client executive for James Lee Witt Associates in Washington, D.C., and received a bachelor's degree in emergency management from Arkansas Tech University in 2008.

The transition hasn't been as difficult as she expected. "You learn how things should work in school, and then you get into the real world and learn how things really do work," Holman said. "So much of it revolves around a bureaucracy, you have to understand that."

There's another, more altruistic, reason to get an emergency management degree. According to Canton, it goes toward making emergency management a profession and not an occupation. A degree shows interest in all phases of emergency management and isn't limited to emergency response or a second retirement career.

Right now, however, "the degree thing is more future-oriented than today-oriented," according to Eric Holdeman, former director of the King County, Wash., Office of Emergency Management. He said, however, that even today a degree gives the applicant an advantage.



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS

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Volume 4 Issue 2

Mike Kelly is working that advantage. Kelly, senior at American Military University, is about to graduate with a degree in emergency management with a specialty in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards. He was a U.S. Marine air traffic controller during 9/11 and wasn't sure what he wanted to do when he left the service.

"Then I stumbled onto the FEMA Independent Study courses, and that is what sank the hook in," Kelly said. The benefit of the degree for Kelly is being regarded as a professional, not just from his peers, but to himself.

On a recent trip to Washington, D.C., Kelly talked to an emergency manager from a rural Midwest county. The man had never heard of the International Association of Emergency Managers, didn't know what a CEM was and didn't see a degree as necessary. He wears many hats, Kelly admitted, and it's more difficult to stay involved and current in that kind of setting, but "it was frightening" to realize what the man didn't know.

The areas common to all these professionals is a shared vision of where emergency management is going. That vision includes degrees in emergency management, the need for experience after leaving school, and professional certification like the CEM and Certified Business Continuity Professional.

Most position announcements posted now for emergency managers say a degree or certification is preferred, but Canton and Holdeman expect that to change in the next 10 years. "I don't know a professional certification that doesn't require a degree," Canton said. "You won't be taken seriously if you didn't."

The bottom line is that if current emergency managers want to be taken seriously, they'd be wise to start working on that bachelor's or master's degree now. And if future emergency managers want to take their place, they should be boosting their marketability by looking for experience opportunities while they're still in school.

### **Secretary Napolitano Announces New National Terrorism Advisory System to More Effectively Communicate Information about Terrorist Threats to the American Public**

By Office of the Press Secretary

#### ***DHS Discontinues Color-Coded Alert System***

Washington, D.C. - Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano today announced that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will discontinue the color-coded alerts of the Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS) in favor of a new system, the National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS), that will more effectively communicate information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector.

The National Terrorism Advisory System will be implemented over the next 90 days in order for DHS and our federal, state, local, tribal, community and private sector partners to transition to the new system.

"Security is a shared responsibility, and we must work together to keep our nation safe from threats," said Secretary Napolitano. "This new system is built on a clear and simple premise: when a credible threat develops that could impact the public, we will tell you and provide whatever information we can so that you know how to keep yourselves, your families and your communities safe."

HSAS was first introduced on March 11, 2002. In July 2009, Secretary Napolitano formed a bipartisan task force of security experts, state and local elected and law enforcement officials, and other key stakeholders—co-chaired by Fran Townsend, former Assistant to President George W. Bush for Homeland Security, and Judge William Webster, former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Central  
(continued on Page 5)



Intelligence Agency (CIA)—to assess the effectiveness of HSAS. The results of this assessment formed the basis of the National Terrorism Advisory System.

Under the new system, DHS will coordinate with other federal entities to issue formal, detailed alerts when the federal government receives information about a specific or credible terrorist threat. These alerts will include a clear statement that there is an “imminent threat” or “elevated threat.” The alerts also will provide a concise summary of the potential threat, information about actions being taken to ensure public safety, and recommended steps that individuals and communities, businesses and governments can take.

The National Terrorism Advisory System alerts will be based on the nature of the threat: in some cases, alerts will be sent directly to law enforcement or affected areas of the private sector, while in others, alerts will be issued more broadly to the American people through both official and media channels—including a designated DHS webpage ([www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts)), as well as social media channels including [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NTASAlerts) and via Twitter [@NTASAlerts](https://twitter.com/NTASAlerts).

Additionally, NTAS will have a “sunset provision,” meaning that individual threat alerts will be issued with a specified end date. Alerts may be extended if new information becomes available or if the threat evolves significantly.

Secretary Napolitano announced this change today during her “State of America’s Homeland Security” address at the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute. A copy of her prepared remarks is available [here](#).

For more information on the National Terrorism Advisory System, visit [www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts).

**FYI – SUBMITTING ARTICLES TO THE  
RESPONDER CAN BE COUNTED AS  
CREDIT TOWARDS CEM**

### **IAEM Certification Recognition Ribbon Now Available**

*By Col. Robert L. Ditch, USAF (Ret.), CEM, CEM® Comm, & Pres. Synaptic Emergency Educational Services*

#### **Uniform-Style Ribbons**

It is with a great deal of excitement that IAEM announces the arrival of the IAEM Certification Recognition Ribbon. The ribbon represents the attributions and contributions of members of the uniformed services and other organizations who have achieved the pinnacle of professional development in emergency management and have received the IAEM Certified Emergency Manager® (CEM®) or Associate Emergency Manager (AEM) credential.

The genesis of this project was the desire of many uniformed services and public safety members to display their hard-earned credential on their uniforms. Unfortunately, many of their organizations do not authorize them to wear the IAEM-provided certification pins on their uniforms, but do authorize them to wear an approved uniform-style ribbon.

Acknowledging this need, the IAEM CEM® Commission authorized the design, heraldry, production, and now sale of these ribbons. Vanguard® Industries, which produces ribbons for the uniformed services, was chosen to develop and produce the ribbon for IAEM. As the former Chair of the IAEM-USA Uniformed Services Caucus and a CEM® Commissioner, I initiated and managed the project. Michael James Kelley, Jr., AEM, First Vice President, IAEM-USA Student Region came up with the design and heraldry.

#### **Ribbon Description**

The colors of the ribbon bands are blue, gold and white. The blue band traditionally represents truth, loyalty, perseverance and vigilance, both to others in the field of emergency management and to those whom we protect. The blue also derives from the civil defense logo, keeping in mind our roots. The gold band represents elevation of the mind and honor. The white band comes from the IAEM logo and represents sincerity. It too harkens back to the original civil defense logo. The rules of heraldry state that you cannot have color on color, or metal on metal. Therefore, to avoid violating these rules, we separated the colors. Two devices denote the different levels of

*(continued on Page 6)*



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS

# THE RESPONDER

## NEWS OF THE IAEM-STUDENT COUNCIL

February 2011  
Volume 4 Issue 2

certification; a bronze letter "A" device added to the represent recertification of the AEM/CEM®. Members may wear up to four bronze devices, with a silver device worn in lieu of five stars.



### How to Purchase Online

Certified individuals may purchase the ribbon online through the IAEM Store at [www.iaem.com/Store](http://www.iaem.com/Store). Devices may be purchased through Vanguard Industries at [www.vanguardmil.com?main\\_page=index&cPath=9\\_523\\_2291](http://www.vanguardmil.com?main_page=index&cPath=9_523_2291). Each ribbon costs \$5.00. Devices and gold frames from Vanguard run from \$1.40 to \$2.60 each.

### IAEM Recognizes Excellence

Both the IAEM-USA Uniformed Services Caucus and CEM® Commission collaborated to make this happen. However, it is still the responsibility of the individual's organization to authorize the wearing of this ribbon and to provide instructions on how to display the ribbon on the uniform. The ribbon and devices are one more way that IAEM recognizes individuals who have demonstrated excellence through certification in emergency management.

### Professional Development Series

By Eric N. Sawyer, AEM, Second Vice President

The IAEM-USA SR created the Professional Development Series with a goal of offering sessions that students may not typically get in a classroom setting. We conduct one webinar (online/teleconference) per month. The webinar sessions are open to all IAEM Members and will be recorded and placed in the members' only section online for future reference.

The Professional Development Series schedule is below. Registration Links can be found in the Members' Only section of the IAEM-USA

Student Region website at [www.iaem.com/students](http://www.iaem.com/students).

- February 17, 2011 16:00 (4:00 PM) ET  
Federal Jobs
- March 10, 2011 16:00 (4:00 PM) ET  
Disaster Technology / American Red  
Cross Response Technology

For more information, please contact Eric Sawyer, AEM, Second Vice President, [sawyer.en@gmail.com](mailto:sawyer.en@gmail.com)

### Suggested Career Tips for Emergency Management

By Scott Preston, BCM Washington University  
Take independent courses in emergency management to learn about the field — FEMA offers a variety of online self-study courses.

Volunteer — Volunteer with your state, county or local emergency management office.

Take advantage of free professional magazines and publications — Natural Hazards Observer, Continuity Insights and (of course) Emergency Management.

Join a professional association and get certified — The International Association of Emergency Managers offers the Certified Emergency Manager and Associate Emergency Manager programs.

Be creative! — An emergency manager might be called something different and still have emergency management responsibilities in areas like public works, public health, special districts or private industry. Read the full guide online at [www.emergencymgmt.com/careertips](http://www.emergencymgmt.com/careertips).

(Continued on Page 7)



- Evacuate with "hands empty, hands open and hands up," in the words of Capt. Michael Riggio.
- If unable to avoid a confrontation with the shooter, attack him "as aggressively and violently" as possible, Riggio said. Use staplers, scissors, furniture and pens as weapons.
- Gang up on the shooter. The more people who attack the shooter, the better the chance they will be able to stop him.

Forty-six percent of active shootings from 1996 to 2010 have been ended by the use of force, either by law enforcement or bystanders. Forty percent of the shooters committed suicide, said Jessica Tisch, director of policy and planning in the HYPD counter-terrorism unit.

The complete NYPD report, "Active Shooter: Recommendations and Analysis for Risk Mitigation" is [available online \(pdf file\)](#).

### Update from AMU/APU IAEM Student Chapter

By Hannah Vick, Chapter President

This winter has been very busy – but very productive! – for our chapter. Several new members volunteered to help with committees and assist with different projects; the AMU/APU IAEM chapter is a fantastic organization to be a part of! Our membership has demonstrated time and again that our leaders are eager to share their expertise and volunteer their time to assist their community, their school and their peers. Wow! So, what's been going on?

- AMU and APU had a tremendous showing at the IAEM annual conference in San Antonio, October 29 – November 4. Dozens of AMU/APU students, faculty and staff attended and our AMU booth was one of the most popular at the EMEX trade show! A huge thanks to Student Affairs for providing financial assistance to four chapter members attend the conference!

- In support of National Preparedness Month (September), the chapter joined with the Epsilon Pi Phi honor society to launch a community service project with the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America. Members of both student organizations can volunteer their time to help Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts earn an emergency preparedness badge, pin or patch. More than 25 AMU/APU IAEM student chapter members have volunteered and we expect even more as this project continues through the spring.
- Our chapter recently created a Governance Committee to bring our by-laws and rules up to date. Bill Duchanse (Chair), Joseph Martin, Diane Robinson and Mark Bejarano are serving in this capacity.
- We continue to host our Distinguished Speaker Series events, where notable members of the disaster management community speak to our members about important topics. In November, we hosted Mr. Daryl Spiewak, who gave an overview of the CEM and AEM credentialing process. In January, we heard from Sir Joseph Varner of Canadian Homeland Defense speak about national security issues.

Thanks to everyone who works to make this chapter successful! Our students bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and "can-do" spirit to our organization, making it a wonderful place to grow professionally and academically.

### Save the Date! IAEM 59th Annual Conference & EMEX 2011 Nov. 12-17, 2010 ~ Las Vegas, NV

***Make conference headquarters hotel reservations now***

IAEM Headquarters staff has so many requests for conference hotel information already that we are providing it very early this year.

Go to [www.iaem.com](http://www.iaem.com) for more information.



# THE RESPONDER

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If you have articles or ideas based on emergency management, homeland security or other related materials, please submit in 750 words or less. If you have questions you may email [JHolt2010@gmail.com](mailto:JHolt2010@gmail.com).

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